Indigenous New Media Arts: Narrative Threads and Future Imaginaries

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This article seeks both to communicate a sense of the vibrancy and diversity of Indigenous new media artworks and projects, and to "frame" them within the context of the particular transnational networks of friendship and support into which they are born and in which they circulate. It is my contention that Indigenous new media arts[1] have particularly flourished across the parts of the "Anglo-world" (Belich) that are the result of the early waves of British settler colonialism, most notably in countries such as Canada, Australia, Aotearoa/New Zealand, and the United States (including Hawai'i).[2]

There are a number of reasons why Indigenous new media art initiatives have really been able to thrive across this particular geopolitical framework. Firstly, there is the nature of settler colonialism itself and the type of transnational dynamics it leaves us with. In distinguishing between colonialist and settler colonialist frameworks, critics have noted that while the former privileges a centre-periphery dynamic, settler colonialism is "inherently transnational" and requires a "'networked' frame of analysis" to capture the movements and exchanges between colonies (Lester, qtd in Veracini 10). Nonetheless, although the phenomenon of setter colonialism has the capacity to bypass the original metropole, it still depends on that metropole for the provision shared cultural values and a *lingua franca* through which cultural sharing may take place. Thus, from the outset, there is a network of settler communities with lots in common and a shared language in which to explore similarities and differences.

Furthermore, while the original circuitry of settler colonial "worlds" is based on the movement and exchanges between settlers rather than the Indigenous peoples the settlers sought to displace, assimilate or eliminate, the same overarching networks and *linguas francas* have also been strategically appropriated by Indigenous peoples to provide the framework for the growth of a pan-Indigenous movement that has blossomed over the last forty years. While this global Indigenous movement stretches far beyond the "Anglo-world," Ronald Niezen argues for a predominance of Indigenous voices from the "Northern Hemisphere," particularly Canada and

the United States, in the first Indigenous-specific meetings organised at the United Nations that provided the basis for the development of this movement (69-72).[3]

Secondly, there is the critical relationship between the global Indigenous movement and new media technologies. The development of the Indigenous movement has been considerably facilitated by the rapid spread of networked digital communication technologies since the late 1980s. As Niezen notes, "the clearest evidence of indigenous networking can be found on the Internet," and, drawing a comparison with Benedict Anderson's influential arguments about the importance of the relationship between printing technologies and the rise of nationalisms, he argues that "the development of information technology has similar implications for the rise of international consciousness among those marginal to nation-states" (226, n.12).[4] Furthermore, it is worth noting that these technologies were developed first in the United States, almost all computer programming languages are based on English, and the lingua franca of the early internet was, by default, English. Thus those Indigenous communities resisting within the "British" (post)colonial settler world,[5] and who were minded to appropriate the structures and technologies of that world to advance their own decolonial agendas, were ideally placed to take advantage of new technologies such as the internet and to undertake the networking necessary to support the development of a nascent global Indigenous movement.

Furthermore, Maximilian Forte argues that while "it is important to underscore the extent to which the symbols and discourses of indigenous groups in one part of the world can and do impact the symbols and discourses of indigenous groups in another part of the world, especially on the Internet," the circulation of "globalized indigeneity" is not multilateral, and "North American Indian labels, motifs, and representations" have significant sway in "influenc[ing] contemporary articulations" of indigeneity elsewhere in the world.[6] Other research in the field focusing on the first decade of the internet's existence would suggest that even if Forte were not overstating the influence of North American Indigenous iconography at the point in time that he was writing, other sources of Indigenous influence were quick to spring up in places such as Australia.[7] Nonetheless the predominance of Indigenous voices and visions from across the "British," "Anglophone" (post)colonial settler world in the context of networked digital media is still apparent.

And finally, although new media technologies are essential to the development of the contemporary global Indigenous movement, new media arts *per se* have not flourished

everywhere that there are self-identifying Indigenous communities that use the internet to network with other Indigenous communities, either in English, or increasingly in other *linguas francas* of colonisation that have substantially increased their presence online such as Spanish or Portuguese.[8] It is the case that, while socio-political conditions in (post)colonial settler nation-states such as Canada or Australia are far from ideal from an Indigenous perspective, these are nonetheless "'successful' colonies" (78) in Niezen's terms: they are large, politically stable, liberal democracies with strong economies that are well able to support and sustain a healthy Indigenous arts "scene" in a way that has not been possible in other contexts either within the "Anglo-world" or in other (post)colonial settler contexts such as Latin America.

It is this contrast between different contexts and how they may facilitate, or not, the creation and circulation of Indigenous new media arts that underpins my curiosity to explore the artworks and projects that are the focus of this article. My main research interests are in Latin American cultural studies, and I am currently involved with a project entitled AEI: Arte Eletrônica Indígena [Indigenous Electronic Art] (www.aei.art.br), run by the NGO Thydêwá (www.thydewa.org). The project promotes the co-creation of what they refer to as "electronic art"[9] between (typically) non-Indigenous artists and interested Indigenous community members in nine different communities in the North East of Brazil. In order to analyse and evaluate the artistic processes and products of the project, I felt the need to familiarise myself with the kind of new media/digital/electronic artworks and projects that I was aware were already being produced by other Indigenous artists in North America. As I began this research, the need to recognise the fact that new media arts created by Indigenous artists in the United States and Canada exist in an "(art) world" that is distinctively structured by the legacy of British settler colonialism, and has strong links to other "comparable" countries such as Australia and Aotearoa became apparent.

The vibrancy of Indigenous new media arts across this particular geopolitical framework is evidenced by a wealth of different artists' networks, residencies, group exhibitions and anthological publications. While some of these are confined to just one locale or, for better or worse, nation-state, others seek to span the full geopolitical range. Whereas more place-based and financially demanding activities such as residencies, workshops and exhibitions tend to be circumscribed by local, regional or national frameworks, arguably it is Indigenous-led artistic/academic networks of friendship and support that are most likely to span the full range of settings. The special issue of the journal *Public*, entitled *Indigenous Art: New Media and the*

Digital (eds Igloliorte et al., 2016), provides maximum proof of the scope and rationale of these networks. In the introduction, Canada-based Indigneous editors Heather Igloliorte, Julie Nagam and Carla Taunton are clear about the transnational (post)colonial settler colonial framework that the works and projects selected span, although less so about its British origins and Anglophone underpinnings: Despite the repeated use of the term "global" in reference to the "Indigenous media art" showcased, they also repeatedly emphasise that "This publication gathers scholars, curators, and artists from the Indigenous territories in Canada, the United States of America, Australia and Aotearoa" (9), all "colonized countries" (13) that "share similar histories of settler colonialism" (6).

With what is such a dynamic, creative "thread" of activity spanning across continents and oceans, it is an invidious task to select materials for specific comment. I have thus structured what follows around various vectors that will give a sense of the diversity of the field: I start with some of the earliest projects, followed by those that most clearly project Indigenous cultural imaginaries into the future ("First Encounters and Indigenous Futures"). I then go on to explore the very different modalities of Indigenous new media arts as well as some of the common threads that bind them together ("Multidimensionality: Voices and Visions"), before closing with a consideration of the different audiences that this kind of art engages ("Sharing Indigenous New Media Arts").

In terms of the relationship of my approach to Indigenous-led academic publications such as the special issue of *Public* mentioned above, as well as the Canada-specific anthology *Transference, Tradition, Technology: Native New Media Exploring Visual and Digital Culture* (eds Claxton et al., 2005), and the North America-specific *Coded Territories: Tracing Indigenous Pathways in New Media Art* (eds Loft and Swanson, 2014), these works for me constitute primary materials in themselves. As Indigenous-led publications they provide compelling evidence not just of the artworks and projects themselves, but also of the transnational networks of friendship and support that underpin their creation and circulation, and of Indigenous understandings of the purpose and intended audiences of Indigenous new media arts.

First Encounters and Indigenous Futures

The beginnings of Indigenous new media arts are contemporaneous with the development of new media itself. Indeed, Indigenous engagement with computing and with code as communication technologies go back at least as far as the early twentieth century—Native American languages were used as code to send messages in both First and Second World Wars (Eglash 181). In the case of the development of the internet, the United States-based Ojibway artist Hymhenteqhous Mizhekay Odayin, more commonly known as Turtle Heart, started creating art on computers from the early 1980s (Eglash 182), and his *American Indian Computer Art Project* website started life on a Bulletin Board System before being hosted by the Massachusetts Institute of Technology as a World Wide Web site in 1991 (Turtle Heart), i.e. before the Internet took off as a widely-accessible public platform in 1994. The *American Indian Computer Art Project* is essentially Turtle Heart's personal artist's website, and it showcases his artistic trajectory, including drawings, paintings, sculpture and computer-generated visual art, the latter a strong thread throughout his career. According to the *AICAP* website, it was one of the first thousand websites ever to be created and has been archived in the Permanent Collections of the United States Museum of Computer History at the Smithsonian Institute. The site switched to personal ownership in 1998 (http://www.aicap.org) and is still live on the internet twenty years later—this quarter-century trajectory is quite a phenomenal achievement for any web-based project.

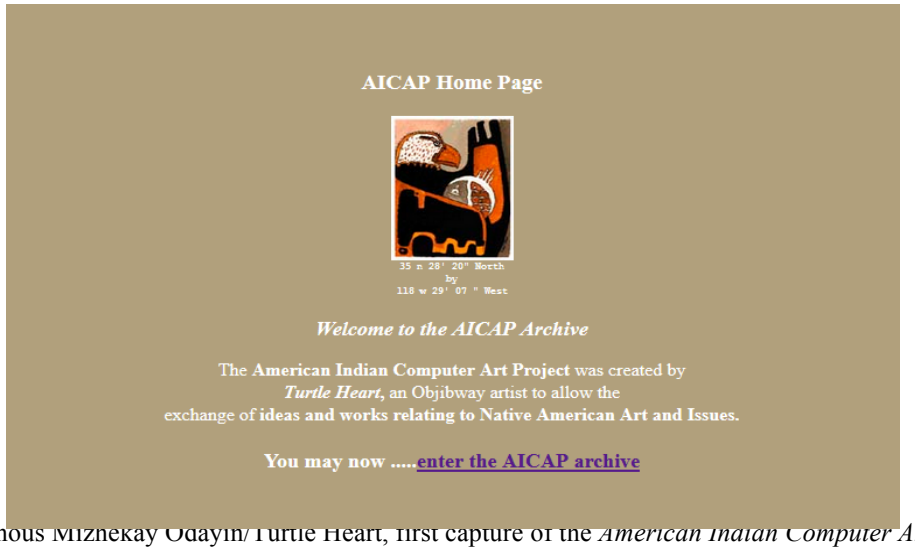

Fig 1. Hymhenteqhous Mizhekay Odayin/Turtle Heart, first capture of the *American Indian Computer Art Project* website on Internet Archive Wayback Machine (12 Dec 1998). Reproduced with kind permission of the artist, for academic and educational use only. No commercial use of any *AICAP* materials is allowed, implied or granted.

While Turtle Heart's *AICAP* is an individual artist's website, and came about as a result of his close links with US academics in the field of computer science (personal email), other Indigenous artists in Turtle Island/North America, particularly those much further north in Canada, first came to new media via the networking and dissemination possibilities offered by the internet for spatially dispersed Indigenous artists, together with the support of art institutions such as the Banff Centre for Arts and Creativity in Alberta. Starting in the mid-1990s there were a whole host of initiatives to network Indigenous artists as well as encourage take-up of new media technologies through face-to-face events and exhibitions, online gallery spaces and chatrooms. See, for example, Drumbytes.Org (http://drumbytes.org, 1994–), Cyber Powwow (http://www.cyberpowwow.net, 1996–), and isi-pikîskwewin ayapihkêsîsak / Speaking the Language of Spiders (http://spiderlanguage.net, 1996–).

These early initiatives have also continued to develop over the last twenty-five years and have led to Indigenous media arts research networks such as Aboriginal Territories in Cyberspace (AbTeC; http://abtec.org, 2004–) and more recently the Initiative for Indigenous Futures (IIF; http://abtec.org/iif; 2015–), both led by Cherokee/Hawaiian/Samoan academic and artist Jason Edward Lewis and Mohawk/Irish artist Skawennati. As Lewis notes, while AbTeC was focused on "claiming territory in the newly formed virtual places of cyberspace," IIF directs its attention at "claiming territory in the future imaginary, or better yet, creating our own" (Lewis 37). Both initiatives thus ensure Indigenous presence in virtual and/or imaginative spaces to contest the dominant view that these spaces are *terra nullius* where "white" people can make themselves at home having removed any concern for competing and/or prior claims for such space, or where their dominance will inevitably prevail after many battles (the typical narrative arc of Western science fiction).[10]

Lewis's and Skawennati's own artistic outputs are important in their own right. See, for example, Skawennati's complex and painstaking *TimeTraveller™* (http://www.timetravellertm.com, 2009–) video-art project created using machinima technology that records real-time interactions in gaming environments, in this case the actions of avatars created by the artist to support roleplay scenarios in Second Life, and which retells significant episodes of history from a First Nations perspective (Ore; LaPensée and Lewis).

Fig 2. Skawennati. "Dakotas Raise Weapons", machinimagraph from *TimeTraveller*™ (2010). Reproduced with kind permission of the artist. Image may not be reproduced without permission.

However, what is perhaps even more important is the fact that the directors have arguably inspired a whole generation of Indigenous artists to work with computer gaming technologies through the Skins Workshops on Aboriginal Storytelling in Digital Media (http://skins.abtec.org) that AbTeC has been running since 2008. (See, for example, the work of Beth LaPensée.) These workshops have focused on developing the potential of Indigenous youth from a wide variety of different ethnic groups, predominantly in Canada but also in places such as Hawai'i, to simultaneously engage with new technologies and with their own cultures through the design of computer games that represent them and their worldviews, including their visions of what kind of futures they want to have. This is not only important in terms of ensuring the passing on of Indigenous knowledge and cosmovisions (worldviews), from generation to generation, but also in terms of contributing to the envisioning of possible futures for the whole of humanity. That is to say, one hopes that Indigenous science-fiction imaginaries can offer much needed correctives to the above-mentioned mainstream science-fiction narratives that tend to rerun colonialist first-person-shooter scenarios, thus delivering only the unimaginative futures conjured up by those who hanker after the glories of conquests past.

Similar initiatives are also evident elsewhere in the British settler colonial world, such as in the Pilbara region of Australia, where Ngarluma youth have collaborated on a project

sponsored by Big hART—a not-for-profit community arts initiative— to create an interactive animated science-fiction comic storybook for iPads called *The Neomads* (http://yijalayala.bighart.org/neomad, 2010–), and which is based on "Dreamtime stories about the land, seas and rivers, sacred sites and spirits" (Bessant and Watts 1). Bessant and Watts voice some concerns about the ability of the project to not simply further essentialise and commodify Indigenous identities in a new medium and to offer real agency for the Ngarluma youth involved (11-12). Nonetheless, they conclude that "*The Neomads* contests the idea of who is a 'real' Aboriginal by demonstrating that the young participants are savvy technicians skilled in new media" and "creative bricolage," and that they are able to use new media to strengthen their sense of community belonging, as well as relate to a fast-changing, multicultural world (Bessant and Watts 11-12). Thus, through these gaming imaginaries, and the creative, intercultural skills and positionalities developed in their composition, Indigenous youth and artists can be seen to be making a significant contribution to future-proofing their cultures.

Multidimensionality: Voices and Visions

The different manifestations of Indigenous new media arts are as diverse as one can imagine, ranging from Inuit (Pond Inlet, Nunavut) artist Ruben Anton Komangapik's *Nattiqmut Qajusiqujut (the seal that keeps us going)* (2014), a 15cm-wide mixed-media piece combining harp seal skin, various different metals and nylon thread and incorporating a QR code dyed into the seal skin which leads to a YouTube video of the artist telling a family story of cultural survival; to British/Māori (Ngapuhi, Ngāti Hine and Ngai Tu) artist Lisa Reihana's c.20m-wide and 4m-tall,[11] 64-minute-duration video installation *In Pursuit of Venus [Infected]* (2015-17). The latter work took Reihana ten years to create and it is based on a revisionist re-enactment of first encounter between Indigenous people and Captain Cook and his crew in Tahiti for the 1769 Transit of Venus—a prelude to the colonisation of the entire region—as seen in "a scenic wallpaper from 1805 called *Les Sauvages de la Mer Pacifique* (or *Savages of the Pacific*), created by French manufacturer Joseph Dufour based on the design of painter Jean-Gabriel Charvet" (Jefferson). In the "digital wallpaper" installation, the figures depicted "come to life," embodied by Australian Indigenous actors in the main, and act out vignettes that trouble any Manichean readings of the narrative of first encounter, encouraging viewers to adopt their own point of view (a play on the work's acronym, "POV"). Yet, despite vast differences in materials

or scale, there are, nonetheless, obvious common threads running across a great many of these works relating to questions of Indigenous voice and agency, cultural heritage and "story-telling" via new media, as well as wider questions of cosmovision and ethics of representation.

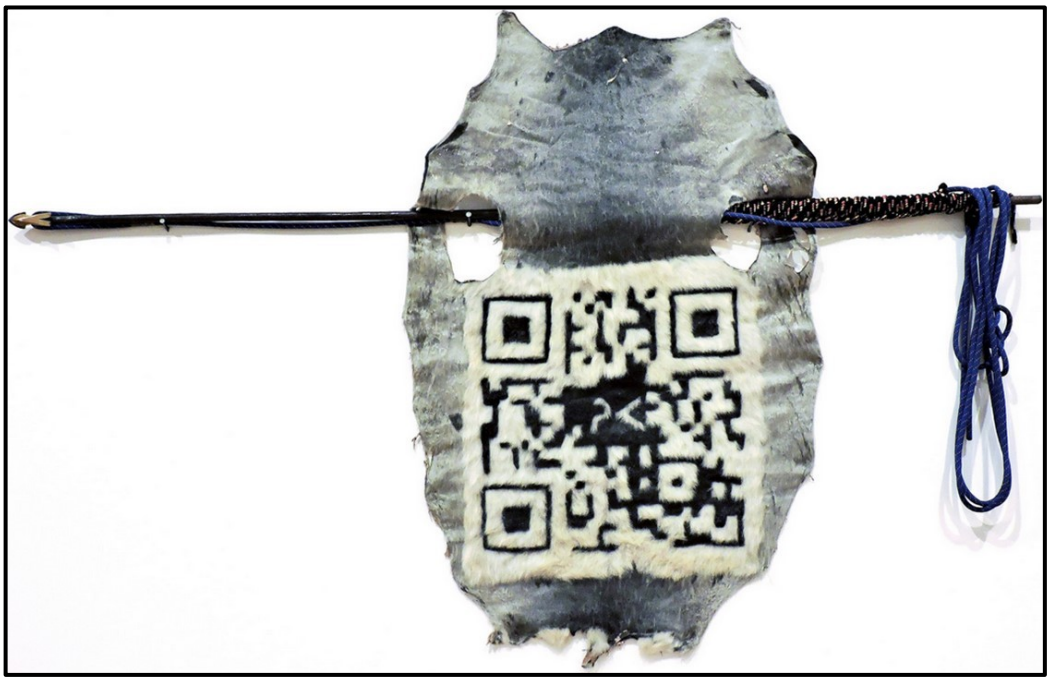

Fig 3. Ruben Anton Komangapik, *Nattiqmut Qajusiqujut (the seal that keeps us going)* (2014). Harp seal skin, indelible ink, steel, bronze, sterling silver, nylon cord, and waxed nylon, 114.5 x 180 x 6cm, National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa. Reproduced with kind permission of the artist and the National Gallery of Canada. Image may not be reproduced without permission. Scan QR code with any QR code reader to access the video.

Fig 4. Lisa Reihana, *In Pursuit of Venus [Infected]* (2015–17). Single channel video, 16k Ultra-HD video, colour, sound, 64 mins, c.20m-wide/4m-tall screen. Supported by Creative New Zealand, New Zealand at Venice, Artprojects, Campbelltown Arts Centre, Park Road Post. Installation view, *Lisa Reihana | Cinemania*, Campbelltown Arts Centre, 2018. Photo: Document Photography. Reproduced with kind permission of the artist and CAC. Video footage showing how the installation was made and how it works available at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WmMRF5nw9UI

As Jason Edward Lewis argues, the multidimensionality of digital art forms (the facility to provide different layers or divergent narrative threads via links, for example) is an excellent way of providing "a much fuller picture of what this history is or what this contemporary situation is" and ensuring that a wider range of voices can be heard (Lewis, in interview with Smyth). Excellent examples of layering, multi-voiced-ness and alternative means of story-telling are to be found in the multimedia work of Diné (Navajo) artist William Ray Wilson. In a series of beadwork "weavings," including *Auto Immune Response: Weaving the Sacred Mountains* (2011-12) and *eyeDazzler: Trans-customary Portal to Another Dimension* (2011), Wilson embeds scannable QR-codes into the weavings. In *Auto Immune Response* these QR-codes link to short videos that focus on "a post-apocalyptic Navajo man's journey through an uninhabited landscape," and raise questions about ecological change, the loss of key Indigenous sacred landscapes, and the possibility of survival and "reconnection to the Earth" (Wilson, interviewed

by Moomaw and Lukovic). In *eyeDazzler*, a much bigger public-art piece made of 76,000 4mm-diameter glass beads, the textile is much more complex in itself, referencing a particular two-sided Navajo textile design as made by the artist's grandmother. Where the cultural knowledge required for the elaboration of such traditional textiles is being lost, Wilson uses two identical QR-codes to offer an alternative "trans-customary portal" (in his terms) to access that knowledge—the codes lead to a two-channel video of his mother and aunt discussing, in Diné,[12] how their mother had made the original rug, while the viewer sees images of how the new rug is being made and who is involved in the project.[13] As Wilson notes, rather than simply foisting something new and high-tech onto an artform perceived as "traditional" and "static," "our project was always about working from within and developing a trans-customary form based on something that our mothers and their mothers before them have always been innovating" (Wilson, interviewed by Moomaw and Lukovic). The *eyeDazzler* project was also a community collaboration, given the enormity of the task of making the piece, and designed as a piece of public art to complete the feedback loop between creative communal praxis and its intended local (Diné-speaking) audience.

Figs 5 & 6. William Ray Wilson, *eyeDazzler: Trans-customary Portal to Another Dimension* (2011); whole work and detail. Reproduced with kind permission of the artist.

A more recent project that evidences the facilities of "layering" in digital art, is Wilson's *Critical Indigenous Photography Exchange (CIPX)* which includes a series of eight "talking tintypes" (https://willwilson.photoshelter.com/gallery/Talking-Tintypes/G0000n_hiXQrBXNw, 2015).[14] These are conventional-looking ethnographic black-and-white tintype photographs of Indigenous subjects in the style of Edward S. Curtis. But these are not just conventional ethnographic portraits, presenting objectified, decontextualised images of unnamed Indigenous subjects for consumption by the Western gaze. The "exchange" of the title suggests that these images are the result of a collaborative "exchange" between sitter and photographer which grants the sitter greater agency in the way in which they are represented and offers new ways for viewers to understand contemporary Indigenous identities. It effects this exchange by means of adding new layers to the ostensibly traditional image. Indeed, when they are scanned with an Augmented Reality app (Layar), the images are overlayed with video material from the sitting such that sitters can both return the viewer's gaze and speak for themselves.[15] The results, as readers may judge for themselves by downloading the free Layar app and scanning the images below, are really very arresting and effective.

Figs 7 & 8. William Ray Wilson, "Insurgent Hopi Maiden" (2015), and "Chairman Shotton of the Otoe-Miossouria Tribe" (2016), from the "Talking Tintypes" series in Wilson's *Critical Indigenous Photography Exchange (CIPX)* project. Reproduced with kind permission of the artist.

Another way of thinking about the issue of layering in these images is also to consider the fact that Wilson has chosen to include some ostensibly Latina/o subjects alongside the Native American sitters,[16] thus hinting at the complexity of the relationships and/or overlapping identities between Native American communities in the South West, the large, and fast-growing, numbers of *mestiza/o* (mixed-race) Chicanas/os and Latinas/os in the region, and the not-insignificant numbers of Indigenous community members from further south in the Americas who have settled in the area. While the majority *mestiza/o* population likes to emphasise its Indigenous ancestry as a way asserting an a priori right to reside in the US Southwest and emphasising its own sense of colonisation by Anglo-America,[17] this indigenist dynamic also tends to erase the presence of self-identifying Indigenous peoples among the Chicana/o and Latina/o populations as a whole. Indigenous people of Latin American origin in the US Southwest have to negotiate their multiple oppressions as both Indigenous and Chicana/o or Latina/o, as well as the complexity of their "settler" relationship vis-à-vis Native American communities in the region. As critics have noted, these are "layered, complex, multifocal, and multi-vocal Indigenous" (Blackwell, Boj Lopez and Urrieta Jr, 132) identities that are very much part of the contemporary, transnational, transcultural, and cosmopolitan forms of indigeneity (Forte) that Wilson sought to photograph.

A significant amount of Indigenous new media arts created to date has come in the form of large-scale digital video and multimedia installations. Lisa Reihana's *Tai Whetuki—House of Death Redux* (2015), for example, focuses on Māori and Pacific rituals around death and mourning. The two-channel video installation takes up two whole sides of a room that is otherwise in complete darkness. Nonetheless, the videos are designed to partly project, and partly reflect onto the polished floor, thus over-spilling their "natural" limits, and a hazer is also used to create a mist that is picked up by the light of the projector. This last element was intended by Reihana to evoke a sense of "spirit" (interview with Tamati-Quennell 67).

Another example—one that offers a meta-narrative about "old" media and voice to boot—is *The Phone Booth Project* (http://www.lilyhibberd.com/The_Phone_Booth_Project_new.html, 2012-13), by non-Indigenous Australian artist Lily Hibberd and Martu filmmaker Curtis Taylor. The installation stems from a community-based project around the social role still played by phonebooths in the remote communities of Australia's Western Desert (Biddle, Hibberd and Taylor 110). When

installed in the Furtherfield Gallery in Finsbury Park for the *Networking the Unseen* exhibition of Australian aboriginal digital art curated by Gretta Louw in summer 2016, the installation consisted of three whole-wall videos featuring Martu community members discussing, in different languages (but with subtitles in English), what the phonebooths meant to them, how they have appropriated this technology, as well as other footage of the booths in the communities. In the same space there was also a real phonebooth, red sand on the floor and lighting to mimic the pounding heat of the desert sun (Rai).

In both these cases, what is important is the immersive, visceral impact of the installations: this aspect is really enhanced by the non-digital elements that force viewers to engage with the works through all of their senses. This decentring of the digital, relegating it to be just another means for communication that Indigenous artists may appropriate at will, is a helpful corrective in a field that has often given in to too much celebratory, utopianist hype about the potential of digital media to revolutionise human society, including "freeing us from the meat" of our carnal bodies and painstakingly-negotiated social identities.[18] Furthermore, the "whole-body" experience offered by such video installations helps to move them beyond the conventions of "Western" documentary practices, and works, instead, to engage the viewer with Indigenous cultural repertoires.[19]

Fig 9. Lisa Reihana, *Tai Whetuki—House of Death Redux* (2015). Ultra-HD, widescreen cinema aspect ratio, 2-channel video, sound, 14 mins. Photograph of the installation at *The Walters Prize 2016* exhibition, Auckland Art

Gallery Toi o Tāmaki, 2016. Installation view, *Lisa Reihana* | Cinemania, Campbelltown Arts Centre, 2018. Photo: Jay Patel. Reproduced with kind permission of artist and CAC. Sample of video available at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x6tVOhG2Ruo

Figs 10 & 11. Lily Hibberd and Curtis Taylor, *The Phone Booth Project* (2012-13). Photographs of installation as featured on the project website. Website also includes sample videos. Reproduced with kind permission of the artists.

Sharing Indigenous New Media Arts

Indigenous new media artists and community art projects have flourished across the contemporary British (post)colonial settler world over the last twenty years (or so), particularly in Canada, the United States, Australia and Aotearoa. Integral to this flourishing, such artists and projects have often used the networks of friendship and support provided by other Indigenous artists and supporters elsewhere in that "world," as evidenced by the Indigenous-led works of scholarship on the subject, in order to strengthen their sense of identity as "Indigenous peoples," as well as raise the profile of this kind of art. But the question remains, raise the profile with whom? Who is the intended audience of this kind of art?

As the editors of the special issue of *Public* dedicated to *Indigenous Art: New Media and the Digital* (2016) note, their anthology was designed precisely "to showcase the invaluable momentum created by existing global networks of Indigenous artists, curators, and scholars, and to share the knowledges and practices advanced through such networks" (Igloliorte et al., 6). Elsewhere in their introduction, however, the editors make the case for the primacy of global Indigenous artistic and cultural exchange achieved through these works and projects, of an engagement with Indigenous (counter)publics, invoking the potential that these practices have to promote decolonial forms of critical mass referred to as "*gathering*" (they appropriate Māori scholar Linda Tuhiwai Smith's term), "Indigenous *networking*," and "Indigenous-to-Indigenous dialogue around the world" (Igloliorte et al., 6).

Nonetheless, in the earlier Indigenous-led, Canada-specific anthology, *Transference, Tradition, Technology: Native New Media: Exploring Visual and Digital Culture* (2005), one of the editors, Dana Claxton, specifically notes that as Indigenous new media arts become more recognised and enter formal gallery spaces, they are predominantly appreciated by a "non-Aboriginal audience" (16). Despite voicing concerns about the possible co-optation of Indigenous new media art by the dominant, largely non-Indigenous academy and art world, Claxton is positive about the decolonial potential of the increasing presence of Indigenous new media art works in such fora, hoping that the exchange with the non-Indigenous viewer can be "one of pedagogy, understanding, truth, hope" (16), building "trust and interrelationships with non-Aboriginal and Aboriginal communities" (17). She goes on to argue that "By decolonizing the exhibition space and art discourses, an Aboriginal worldview will flourish, taking hold within the artworld" (17).

It is in this sense, then, that we should celebrate the fact that the most successful of Indigenous new media artists featured in this article now figure in the exhibitions and permanent collections of major institutions both within the geopolitical limits of the contemporary British (post)colonial settler world, as well as beyond. For example, an installation of Lisa Reihana's *In Pursuit of Venus [Infected]*, called *The Emissaries*, was selected for exhibition in the New Zealand pavilion at the 2017 Venice Biennale, and praised as the best work of the whole exhibition by eminent art critic Waldemar Januszczak. At present (November 2018), the same work is being exhibited at the Royal Academy in London as part of the impressive "Oceania" exhibition of indigenous art from the region, from first encounter to the present day. The presence in these venues of Reihana's large-scale critical revisioning of first encounter is a significant part of what a decolonisation of those spaces entails, particularly given their tendency to function within the nation-state framework of international "world fair"-like exhibitions or anthropologically-curated art "spectacles" reminiscent of the imperial-legacy collections of "world" art in places such as the British Museum.

Other of the artworks featured in this article have recently been purchased by major galleries in the relevant (post)colonial settler nation-states that clearly seek to expand their collections to be more inclusive of the ethnic diversity of the nation in question. See, for example, Ruben Komangapik's *Nattiqmut Qajusiqujut* which has been purchased by the National Gallery of Canada, or some of Will Wilson's photographs that are now held by the Portland Art Museum. While this is also to be celebrated, one of the dangers with purchase by art galleries is, however, that they place a stranglehold on the further circulation of (images of) such works such that they are reserved only for those with the cultural and economic capital required to visit such institutions or to purchase expensive art books.

A lot rides, therefore, on the careful curation of international exhibitions and state-owned collections so that Indigenous new media arts are not shoe-horned into "frame"-works that limit and neutralise their ability to communicate, nor made inaccessible to those communities whose stories they tell. Furthermore, circulation in such fora should, of course, not be taken as the only measure of success. Travelling exhibitions that take works to Indigenous communities themselves and co-creative community new media arts projects have an important role to play in ensuring that Indigenous communities continue to be both participants in the creation of such works as well as the primary audiences thereof.

Notes

[1] Terms such as new media art (and its translations into other European languages with which I work) are often used interchangeably with others such as digital art or electronic art. Electronic art covers the widest range of artforms (indeed there are works of electronic art that are not digital at all), then digital art, and new media art is arguably a subset within digital art. There are further subsets of digital art such as computer art, internet art or net.art. (For electronic art see Shanken; for digital art see Paul; for new media art see Tribe and Jana; and for internet art see Stallabrass, and Greene.) In this article I prefer to speak of "arts" rather than "art" in order to acknowledge the significant diversity of works that may be classified under this rubric, as well as to embrace community-based creative projects using new media that are not primarily intended for consumption by the outside world as "art."
I have chosen to use the term "new media art" here as it is the term most frequently used in relation to work in this field by the Indigenous artists included in this article, although digital art is also used on occasion. The preference for the use of the term new media art is telling in that it focuses attention much more on the communicative potential of the work than on the technological underpinnings. For further discussion of the merits of this different qualifiers in relation to poetry, as well as a discussion of why we might be better off bracketing the "new" of "new media," see Pitman, "(New) Media Poetry."
[2] Although many see the phenomenon of settler colonialism as related specifically to British colonialism, more recent research recognises the much more varied instances of settler colonialism across the world and at different times (see Cavanagh and Veracini, and, for more recent historical examples, Elkins and Pedersen). Even in cases that have provided the classic contrast to British settler colonialism, such as the colonialist enterprises of the Spanish and the Portuguese in what is now Latin America, and their reliance on a dynamic of *mestizaje/mestiçagem* (racial mixing), scholars have started to make the case for the ways in which settler colonialism may be seen to be a pertinent frame of analysis in those contexts also (Castellanos). It is for this reason that I chose to identify the specific settler colonial framework that underpins the Indigenous new media arts studied here as "British" in origin, and "Anglophone" in terms of the language of colonisation.
[3] Niezen also notes that Indigenous communities from the South Pacific (including Australia and Aotearoa, in this designation rather than just the smaller South Pacific islands, I believe) were not far behind those from the Global North in participating in the development of a global Indigenous movement (69). It goes without saying that the ability to communicate in English, and to a lesser extent French, underpins this early development of the Indigenous movement.
[4] Writing just a year earlier, in 2002, the anthropologist Maximilian C. Forte, also made a strong case for the role played by the internet in the spread of what he calls "globalized indigeneity": "the globalized spread of motifs, practices, products, ideologies, cosmologies, organizations, media and support networks of indigeneity, *especially on the Internet*, have led to the construction of indigeneity as a *macro* phenomenon, lifted from the confines of any one location, and seemingly applicable to any other location. At this level, we are then speaking of an indigenous *macro-community* that is *trans-local* and constitutes a virtual *meta-indigeneity*."
[5] I am indebted to Chadwick Allen's formulation "(post)colonial settler nation-states" (xii) in my use of the term "(post)colonial settler" here.

[6] Elsewhere in his article, Forte also argues that "the U.S., Canada, and Brazil are most likely the symbolic core of internationalized paradigms of indigeneity, providing perhaps a disproportionate amount of the motifs of indigeneity, the emblematic struggles, and the trademark representations of 'indigenous issues'" as they circulate online. The inclusion of Brazil is unusual given the predominantly Anglophone, British settler colonial paradigm that I have been outlining. However, its influence at the point in time that Forte was discussing the matter (2002), was arguably more due to the attention given to the Amazon and its peoples via Anglophone NGOs and international organisations based in the Global North rather than the circulation online of materials put up in Portuguese or in any of the nearly 200 Indigenous languages spoken in Brazil.

[7] Australia-based researchers Laurel Evelyn Dyson, Max Hendriks and Stephen Grant give a much more nuanced picture of the way the Internet has been used by Indigenous communities in Australia and elsewhere in the world and without undue reliance on North American paradigms of indigeneity, concluding their edited anthology, *Information Technology and Indigenous People* (2007), with the assertion that, "The way that information technology is used by indigenous peoples around the world is hugely varied. It reflects their different cultures and their aspirations for themselves, their families and their nations. It reflects the special needs for each particular community at this particular time in history" (314).

[8] Indigenous languages are used for intra-community communication online where the speakers of that language are sufficiently numerous and spread out over a wide geographical area. However, for online networking between Indigenous communities speaking different Indigenous languages, inevitably the dominant European language of colonisation is used as *lingua franca*.

[9] The works produced under the aegis of the project go well beyond the remit of just those produced using new media or digital technologies. The reference to electronics may also focus our attention on the materiality of the work—there are many works of electronic art that are installation pieces—rather than on the immateriality of a work created and often displayed on a computer screen.

[10] For more on the colonialist discourse surrounding the development of the internet, together with Indigenous responses to it, see Pitman, "Warriors and Weavers."

[11] Exact dimensions differ for different installations of the work.

[12] The use of Diné language gives a clear steer as to the ideal audience of this piece (ie. other Diné speakers), and evidences an uncompromising attitude towards the needs of English-speaking audiences.

[13] Nb. While the original QR-code no longer scans, the two-channel video is available here: https://vimeo.com/34320606.

[14] Wilson has produced more of these "talking tintypes" but there are only eight displayed under this heading on his website at present.

[15] A further aspect of "exchange" lies in Wilson's choice to allow the sitter to keep the original tintype image, if he is allowed to keep and use a digital copy.

[16] I am using the names/community roles of the sitters, as given by Wilson on his website, as my guide here, along with elements of traditional dress for some.

[17] Many Chicanas/os were effectively "crossed by the border" as the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo was signed in 1948 ceding vast swathes of then Mexico to the United States.

[18] See Lupton for an analysis of the utopianism of early cyberculture.

[19] In making this claim, I am adapting Diana Taylor's *The Archive and the Repertoire*, which contrasts the embodied knowledge of performance to the textual knowledge of the traditional archive, to a slightly different context.

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