

Austere hopes find pleasure in lately cherished flowers.
The blooms are articulate deluge, hues of delicacy.
Petals parted dim renderings, the viable imprint
of the blood-hot beam of light with reformed courage.
Beveling the finish to suppression, the blade of choice
brings the flourish of dividing while adequately doubling
worth by two. Multiplying. The luminescent burning of space.
The heat is a domicile as abandoned as red roses budding
their ascension from stem.

The sun has its own drum contenting itself with the rose
heart it takes into continual rumbling. The connection
of surface and hand. The great head of dark clouds finds
its own place of unraveled repercussions and disruption,
elsewhere, over the tall, staunch mountains of indemnity.

Excerpted from Elizabeth Woody's "Illumination"
from *Luminaries of the Humble* (1994)

Gratitude to the artist for inspiring the title of this exhibition.

You are standing on Indigenous lands.

For more information visit:
landacknowledgment.brown.edu

Free and open to the public

Cohen Gallery

Granoff Center for the Creative Arts
154 Angell St, Providence, RI

Gallery Hours

Monday–Friday: 9 AM–9 PM
Saturday: 12 PM–5 PM
Sunday: 12 PM–8 PM
Closed on University holidays



Elizabeth James-Perry
Erin Genia
Robert Peters
Duane Slick

the sun has its own drum

August 19–December 14, 2025

The sun has its own drum presents four Northeast-based artists whose work explores the proliferation of Indigenous worldviews and values through sound. Many Indigenous epistemologies are rooted in ideas of kinship between human and more-than-human beings, seeking rhythmic alignment within the natural world. The work presented here considers the intangible power of sound to facilitate this intersubjective kinship, to make and reclaim space, and to challenge Western ocularcentrism. Each artist draws from long lineages of creative practice, making material innovations as forms of sonic world-building. Though some work directly with sound as a medium, others translate sonic phenomena into unique visual languages.

Elizabeth James-Perry merges Aquinnah Wampanoag cultural expressions with marine science to highlight the influence of echolocation on ecological regeneration. Drawing from Dakota cultural imperatives, **Erin Genia** creates sound vessels that blur the distinction between art and science, human and more-than-human, to promote interconnectedness through material resonance. **Robert Peters** expresses the centrality of music to his sense of Mashpee Wampanoag and African American identity and community, by uniting storytelling, poetry, and music within rhythmic mixed-media compositions. Blending Meskwaki and Ho-Chunk Nation oral and visual traditions with modernist and postmodernist painting histories, **Duane Slick**'s paintings explore the sonic spatialization of place at night, translating aurally-perceived environments into visual abstraction. *The sun has its own drum*, referencing Warm Springs/Yakama/Navajo Nation poet and educator Elizabeth Woody's sonic geographies, pulses with resonant visions of interdependence.

– Christina Young, Exhibitions Fellow, Brown Arts Institute/Bell Gallery

The sun has its own drum is curated by Christina Young (MA '26 Public Humanities), Exhibitions Fellow at The Bell Gallery/Brown Arts Institute, with Thea Quiray Tagle, PhD, The Bell/Brown Arts Institute's Associate Curator. We acknowledge the input from students enrolled in the Spring 2025 Critical Curating course at RISD taught by Kathy Battista, PhD.

The exhibition team at the Brown Arts Institute includes Ian Budish, Exhibitions Installation Manager; Kate Hao, Curatorial Coordinator; Kate Kraczon, Director of Exhibitions and Chief Curator; Preparators Naushon Hale and Eddie Villanueva; and Nicole Wholean, University Curator and Registrar.

Elizabeth James-Perry Aquinnah Wampanoag

Elizabeth James-Perry is an internationally-known Aquinnah Wampanoag artist working in wampum jewelry, textiles, water-color maps and garden installations. Based in Dartmouth, Massachusetts, the artist holds a degree in marine science that complements her knowledge of Traditional Ecological Knowledge. Working across mediums, she connects these forms of cultural expression to Native identity and sovereignty, maritime traditions, and ecological restoration.

Duane Slick Meskwaki Nation of Iowa, Ho-Chunk Nation of Nebraska

Duane Slick is an artist of Native American descent from the Meskwaki Nation of Iowa and the Ho-Chunk Nation of Nebraska. His acrylic paintings blend the subjects of oral and visual Native American traditions with a focus on trickster strategies and modernist/post-modernist painting histories. His work has been described as “dream paintings whose aim is the exploration of matters spiritual, not physical.”

Robert Peters Mashpee Wampanoag

Robert Peters is a Mashpee Wampanoag artist, writer, and culture keeper. His writing includes *13 Moons: A Meditation On Indigenous Life*, and *Big Baby*, which imagines the legendary Wampanoag giant, Maushop, as a baby. A prolific painter and illustrator, he uses acrylic and ink to depict various aspects of Indigenous history and contemporary life. He is a fire keeper and community activist.

Erin Genia Sisseton-Wahpeton Oyate

Erin Genia, an enrolled member of the Sisseton-Wahpeton Oyate, is a multidisciplinary artist, educator and community organizer specializing in Native American and Indigenous arts and culture. Working across sculpture, fibers, sound, performance, digital media, writing, painting, printmaking, jewelry and ceramics, her work amplifies the powerful presence of Indigenous peoples in the arts, sciences and public realm. Genia's artistic practice merges Dakota cultural imperatives with pure expression and material exploration to invoke an evolution of thought, practice, and humanity that aligns with the cycles of the natural world.