

Southeastern Center for Contemporary Art

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tutional racism, and indigenous futurism.

“As artists and agents of Indigenous imagination, we are more than our shared histories of colonization,” said artist Wilson. “There are other aspects of our experience that we must express and convey and these expressions must be received with respect. This necessity requires that we tell our stories well, with the vision of a people who understand the generative power of representation. It is in this particular process of self-expression that we practice Native representational sovereignty.”

Will Wilson: Connecting the Dots is supported, in part, by The Ellsworth Kelly Foundation and the Foundation for Contemporary Arts.

AUTO-IMMUNE RESPONSE (AIR)

This project began in 2005 and continues today. In it, a figure known only as The Protagonist navigates a post-apocalyptic landscape populated by Native People. Wilson himself portrays the central figure, a role at once empowering, sacred, and therapeutic. Fusing multiple genres of photography, he confronts historical and intellectual trauma, considering how he has come to embody such trauma.

THE CRITICAL INDIGENOUS PHOTOGRAPHIC EXCHANGE (CIPX)



Detail of Will Wilson, “Auto Immune Response #5”, 2004.

tered practice that convenes indigenous artists, art professionals, government leaders, and the general public in the performative ritual of studio portraits. Wilson employs large format (8x10) wet plate collodion studio photography, the same process that has so deeply influenced our collective understanding of Native American people and our national identity. Augmented reality technology and smart devices map videos to the portraits, connecting the images to the subjects’ voices and perspectives.

CONNECTING THE DOTS

Most Americans know the story of the Navajo Code Talkers, who used the unwritten language as code to help win World War II. Lesser known, but arguably more consequential, is that the fissile material used in the development and stockpiling of atomic bombs was sourced from Indigenous nations, in particular Navajo Nation. *Connecting the Dots* is based on a photographic survey of the over 500 Abandoned Uranium Mines



Will Wilson, “Mexican Hat Disposal Cell Redux”, Halchita, Utah, Navajo Nation, 2019.

(AUMs) located on the Navajo Nation. The AUMs are physical manifestations of a complex and traumatic history, and this project raises awareness of the Navajo Nation’s efforts to receive remediation for the uranium extraction that has poisoned the land and impoverished a people.

Wilson is creating an unconventional photographic survey using drone-based, aerial, and app-activated photography to empower Diné people to re-story their narrative. The project uncovers environmental and social degradation, but more importantly, it creates a platform for voices of resilience and a vision for restorative systems of economy and memory-making.

Wilson’s art projects center around the continuation and transformation of customary Indigenous cultural practice. He is a Diné photographer and trans-customary artist who spent his formative years living on the Navajo Nation. Wilson studied photography, sculpture, and art history at the University of New Mexico (MFA, Photography, 2002) and Oberlin College (BA, Studio Art and Art History, 1993).

In 2007, Wilson won the Native American Fine Art Fellowship from the Eiteljorg Museum, in 2010 the Joan Mitchell Foundation Award for Sculpture, in 2016 the Pollock-Krasner Foundation Grant for Photography and in 2020 Wilson was the Doran Artist in Residence at the Yale University Art Gallery.

Wilson has held visiting professorships at the Institute of American Indian Arts (1999-2000), Oberlin College (2000-01), and the University of Arizona (2006-08). In 2017, Wilson received the NM Governor’s Award for Excellence in the Arts. His work is exhibited and collected internationally. Wilson is Program Head of Photography at Santa Fe Community College.

The Southeastern Center for Contemporary Art (SECCA), an affiliate of the North Carolina Museum of Art, offers a front row seat to the art of our time through exhibitions, experiences, and education programs with a focus on regional working artists. Founded in 1956 and located on the scenic James G. Hanes estate in Winston-Salem, SECCA offers unique large-scale indoor and outdoor settings for exploring the intersections of contemporary art and culture.

For further information check our NC Institutional Gallery listings or visit (SECCA.org).

Artworks Gallery in Winston-Salem, NC, Features Works by Barbara Rizza Mellin



Work by Barbara Rizza Mellin

Artworks Gallery in Winston-Salem, NC, features *Etchings and Artist's Books of World Culture* by Barbara Rizza Mellin on view through June 25, 2022. There will be a reception and gallery talk on June 12, 2:30-4pm. The gallery will be open for the Gallery Hop: June 3, 7-10 pm.

Barbara Rizza Mellin’s solo exhibition

showcases our world’s rich trove of folk arts, customs and traditions and celebrates them by visually sharing the sheer joy and awe of the human artistic spirit.

All cultures—indigenous, ethnic, or culturally adapted—bring with them their own characteristics and history, often in-

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corporating rituals and symbols important to their individual identities and distinctive traditions.

Almost every culture has a need for artistic expression in their everyday lives. Through the reminder of these images, we see that across the globe, people sing, produce music and dance; that everywhere, people embellish and decorate surroundings—their personal world—our world—with visual art.

This exhibition consists of 78 intaglio

images (dry point and copper sulphate/salt etchings). Several are matted and framed for gallery wall display, but all are included in a series of 12 separate hand-made, accordion artist books, which correspond to Mellin’s modified version of a familiar, traditional folk song, which served as her matrix.

For further information check our NC Institutional Gallery listings, call the gallery at 336/723-5890 or on the web at (Artworks-Gallery.org).



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