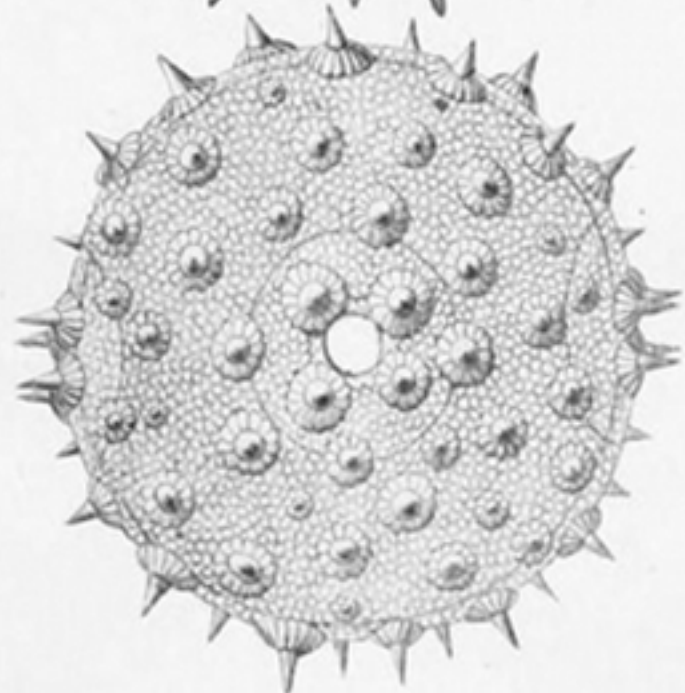
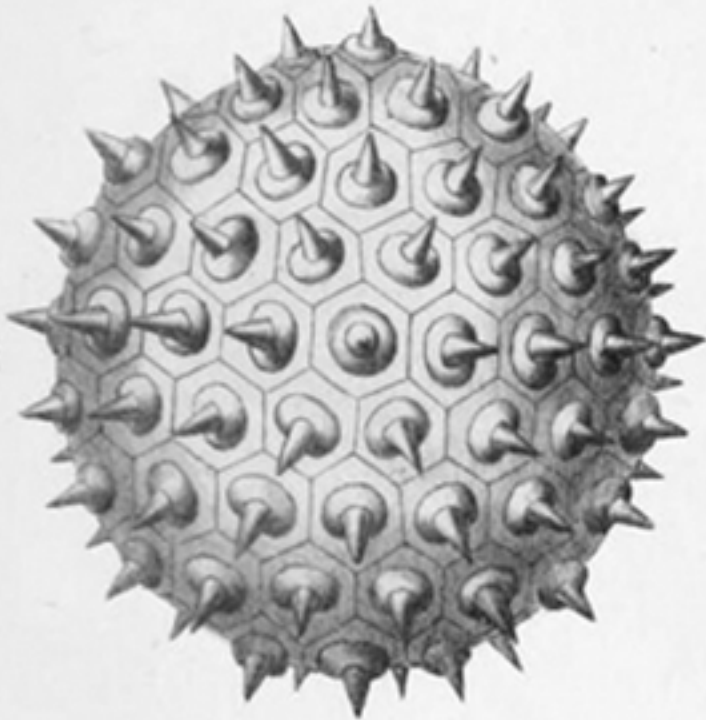
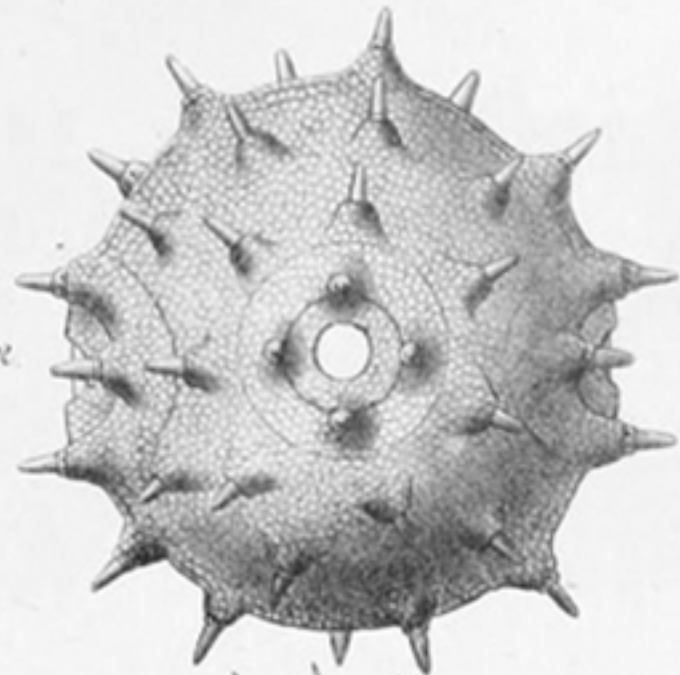
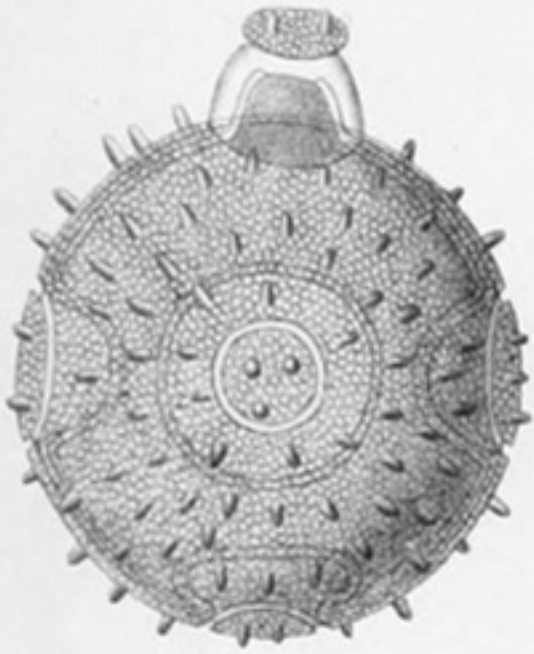


SeedBroadcast

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agri-Culture Journal

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Spring 2015

SeedBroadcast

"A seed makes itself. A seed doesn't need a geneticist or a hybridist or publicist or matchmaker. But it needs help. Sometimes it needs a moth or a wasp or a gust of wind. Sometimes it needs a farm and it needs a farmer. It needs a garden and a gardener. It needs you..."

JANISSE RAY

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5th Edition SeedBroadcast Journal THE DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSIONS IS **AUGUST 30TH 2015**

Send submissions to seedbroadcast@gmail.com

We would like to thank all who generously contributed to our 4th edition of the bi-annual SeedBroadcast agri-Culture Journal. We are building from the soil up and invite all who read this to consider contributing to the 5th edition that will be published in the Autumn of 2015. This contribution could be a drawing, photograph, story, recipe, poem, or an essay, with relevance to the essence of seeds and seed saving practices. We are looking forward to hearing from you. Each of you holds a wisdom and it is this wisdom we hope to share.

Please include a short bio, images should be at least 300 DPI 6"x8," and send us your mailing address as we will mail you a stack of printed copies to distribute in your own locale.

We will be on the road with the Mobile Seed Story Broadcasting Station so look out for us. You can keep up with our travels and encounters with other seed lovers at on our website seedbroadcast.org and follow our blog at seedbroadcast.blogspot.com

We want to thank our fiscal sponsor Littlelobe, the McCune Charitable Foundation, Santa Fe Art Institute, our numerous new SeedBroadcasting cohorts and to all of our volunteers contributors, and supporters. Lacey Adams for graphic design, Kyce Bello for her wise editorial support, to all of our local and national partners and to our seeds that continue to inspire and give us hope.

For an updated list of our 2015 cohorts and partners go to:
SeedBroadcast.org/SeedBroadcast/SeedBroadcast_Roots.html

SEED=FOOD=LIFE

SEEDBROADCAST IS A COLLABORATIVE PROJECT INITIATED BY CHRISSIE ORR AND JEANETTE HART-MANN. WE CAME TOGETHER THROUGH OUR LOVE OF SEEDS, OUR PASSION FOR GROWING OUR OWN FOOD AND OUR ARTISTIC PRACTICE. WE STARTED A CONVERSATION, WHICH HAS EXPANDED AND SPROUTED INTO THE SEEDBROADCAST COLLECTIVE.

"To have a seed, is to have everything."

SEEDBROADCAST holds the belief that it is a human right to be able save our seeds and share their potential, to be able to grow our own food and share this abundance, and to cultivate grass-roots wisdom and share in its creativity. We seek to reveal the culture that has been lost in agriculture and believe that seeds are witnesses to our past. They have their own story to tell and it is up to us to listen.

SEEDBROADCAST encourages communities to keep local food and culture alive and vibrant through working together in creative and inspiring ways. We spend time with people on their farms, in their gardens, at seed exchanges and at community gatherings to dig deeper into the often unheard stories of local agriculture. Our traditional farmers, avid gardeners and local organic food growers are inspired by the seeds they sow and save, they take notice of what grows and what does not, they learn from the seasonal shifts, experiment with when to plant the first pea and when to harvest the seed for next year. This vital knowledge base of plant and human connection is what we seek to cultivate, disperse and nurture.

At the 1st annual Seed Exchange in Anton Chico, Delfinio Valesquez who's family has been growing concha corn for many generations stood with his hand clasped around a corn kernel and spoke loud and clear "If we loose our seeds we will lose our culture."

Our ancient seeds and their diverse stories are in danger of disappearing. They are our lifeline to our past, present and future. Without these ancient, creative, and resilient seeds, we would lose our familial connection to the earth and its biota. So we invite you to hold a seed and listen to what stories it has to tell you, plant a seed and share its wealth. Then share this story with your neighbor and become an inspiration for others to join this radical seed sovereignty movement.

As the soils warm, the birds begin to return and our seeds slowly emerge from dormancy SeedBroadcast is gearing up to the coming spring season.

The conversations and seed stories that have been shared with us this past year have informed and shaped our intentions for this coming SeedBroadcasting season and we are thrilled to be adding some new creative initiatives.

We will be creating |UN|silo|ED| the SeedBroadcast Hub experiment at the Santa Fe Art Institute sfaiblog.org as part of the Food Security residency program (see page 7). We continue our collaboration with Dancing Earth dancingearth.org (see page 28-29) Our spring tours will take us south to Silver City, Gila and on to San Diego where we have been invited to be part in the Thousand Plates art exhibit about food and culture at San Diego State University commonexperience.sdsu.edu/dus/commonexperience/thousand_plates.aspx and many more vibrant community groups. We are also pleased to announce our collaboration with the Student Sustainability Leadership Program at the Institute for American Indian Arts in the creation of a Seed Story library.

To keep track of our community actions, workshops, emergent responses, listen in to our growing collection of seed stories and keep the network and dispersal growing you can go to our website at seedbroadcast.org, check our blog seedbroadcast.blogspot.com and keep up with us at our Facebook page [facebook.com/seedshare](https://www.facebook.com/seedshare).

IN SOLIDARITY,
SEEDBROADCASTERS, FEBRUARY 2015

CALENDAR OF ENGAGEMENTS

YOU CAN CONTACT US AT SEEDBROADCAST@GMAIL.COM OR COME AND FIND US AT THE FOLLOWING:

Saturday, February 28, 10–2pm

ALBUQUERQUE SEED EXCHANGE

Albuquerque Main Library,
Hosted by the ABC Seed Library
501 Copper Ave NW, Albuquerque, New Mexico

Saturday, March 7, 1–3pm

ANTON CHICO SEED EXCHANGE

Old Anton Chico School
New Economic Development Center
(Old Anton Chico School)
Anton Chico, New Mexico

Tuesday, March 10, 4–7pm

Santa Fe Seed Exchange

with Home Grown New Mexico and
City of Santa Fe Parks Division
Frenchy's Field Barn,
2001 Agua Fria,
Santa Fe, New Mexico.

Spring 2015 Southern Tour March 20–28, 2015

Friday & Saturday, March 20–21, 10–5pm

Silver City Garden Expo

with Silver City Farmers Market
Grant County Conference Center
Silver City, New Mexico

Sunday, March 22

Gila Seed Keepers Gathering

Gila, New Mexico

Monday, March 23

Patagonia Seed Gathering

Patagonia, Arizona
More info coming soon!

Tuesday, March 24

Tour of Yuma Seed Culture

Tour of Yuma Seed Culture
On the streets of industrial lettuce and onion seed
Yuma, Arizona

Wednesday, March 25

San Diego/Tijuana Seed Tour

San Diego/Tijuana Seed Tour
San Diego, California
More info coming soon!

Thursday, March 26

A Thousand Plates Event & Panel Discussion

SDSU Downtown Gallery
San Diego, California
More info coming soon!

Spring 2015 Northern Tour April 10–12, 2015

Friday & Saturday, April 10–11

Aztec Seedsavers

Aztec, New Mexico
More info coming soon!

Saturday, April 11, 6–9pm

Annual Hoedown

Montezuma School to Farm Project
Mancos Opera House
Mancos, Colorado

Sunday, April 12, 12–3pm

Mancos Seed Exchange

Mancos Seed Library
Mancos, Colorado

April 27–June 27

SeedBroadcast | UN | silo | ED |

More info coming soon!
Santa Fe Art Institute Food Justice Residency
Santa Fe University of Art and Design,
1600 Saint Michaels Drive,
Santa Fe, New Mexico

May 3–6

National Seed Library Forum/Conference

More info coming soon!
Tucson, Arizona

Saturday, May 23, 1–3pm

March against Monsanto

Tiguex Park in Albuquerque Old Town
Organized by March Against Monsanto
Albuquerque (MAMABQ) & GMO-FREE NM
Albuquerque, New Mexico

Check out seedbroadcast.blogspot.com for updates on SeedBroadcast actions in 2015.

PLEASE HELP US GROW!

Support SeedBroadcast with a tax-deductible donation!

TO MAKE A TAX DEDUCTIBLE DONATION TO SEEDBROADCAST GO TO:

Online donation:

seedbroadcast.org/SeedBroadcast/SeedBroadcast_Donate.html

Or contact our fiscal sponsor Littlelobe for other payment options:

Phone: 505.980.6218

Email: info@littlelobe.org

Your donation will help us keep the Mobile Seed Story Broadcasting Station on the road in search of Seed Stories near and far. It will help keep the agri-Culture Journal free and distributed from hand to hand. It will help sprout SeedBroadcast projects throughout 2015 and beyond!

SeedBroadcast has been and continues to be funded by in-kind donations of time, labor, and money from collective SeedBroadcasters. Additionally, in 2012 – 2014 SeedBroadcast received generous grants from the Kindle Project Fund of the Common Counsel Foundation and McCune Charitable Foundation to support our yearly projects. We are also grateful to the individuals and institutions who have sponsored our participation in their public events helping to offset travel expenses. All of these funds are essential for the successful operation of SeedBroadcast.

With the increasing demands for SEED Action now, we need help to ensure that our 2015 Mobile Seed Story Broadcasting Station Tour, the SeedBroadcast agri-Culture Journal, and our 2015 Residency project, | UN | silo | ED |, at the Santa Fe Art Institute Food Justice Program will have the capacity to dig deep, sprout tall, and shout out Seed Stories across the land.

SeedBroadcast thanks you for your support and BELIEF in the power of Seeds, Stories, and agri-Culture!

“Inside that tiny seed, live the roots, branches, bark, trunk, leaves, twigs and apple fruit of that apple tree. You can't see, feel, hear, taste or smell any of that yet; nevertheless, it is all inside that seed. The moment the seed is in your hand— all of that is in your hand, too, from the root to the bark to the fruit! All you have to do is to push the seed into the soil. And what makes anyone plant any apple seed? It is the belief that in the seed, there is the tree. So, believe. To have a seed, is to have everything.”



|UN|silo|ED|

CALL FOR COLLABORATION:
SEEDBROADCAST//FOOD JUSTICE
AT SANTA FE ART INSTITUTE

SeedBroadcast will be in residency at the Santa Fe Art Institute from April 27 – June 27, 2015 during the SFAI Food Justice Program. We would like to invite you to collaborate on a project we are calling |UN|silo|ED|. This project will map a diversity of issues surrounding Food Justice in parallel with different creative engagement processes. Our intention for this project is to tease out the relationships across disciplines of creative practices such as farmers, activists, policy makers, artists, gardens, educators, and others while also taking a wide view of the many Food Justice issues facing our region and world. This project will be in process in the SFAI Lumpkin room from April 27 – June 27 and will animate several community conversations around Food Justice and creative action.

HOW YOU CAN COLLABORATE....

1. Please send us materials from your creative Food Justice work which might include projects and processes from your farm, garden, studio, classroom, political actions, or other projects you are engaged in. Send us the following:
 - a. Documents from your Food Justice work. Theses may include printable materials that we can pin up to the walls such as photographs of your farms, seeds, and gardens, posters, drawings, notes, designs, maps, pamphlets, and even small objects that can hang or rest on the wall. Please do not send original work.
 - b. Documents from your process which describe the who, what, why, where of your work or particular project.
 - c. A completed survey about your creative process...contact us and we will send you one to fill out.
2. We would love to conduct an audio interview with you about your project and process. All audio interviews will be playing in the SFAI Lumpkin room.
3. Participate in community conversations! If you are available, we would love for you to be a part of the community conversations about Food Justice and Creative Practices. These dates will be announced soon!
4. If you are in Santa Fe during this time, give us a holler and come by to participate in the mapping process!

PLEASE CONTACT SEEDBROADCAST FOR MORE INFORMATION!

JEANETTE HART-MANN AND CHRISSIE ORR AT
SEEDBROADCAST@GMAIL.COM

OR CALL – 505-718-4511

Print quality materials can be sent to us via drop box at: [dropbox.com/sh/rvx6kjpwn3tnbxw/AAAmPzfUnp5nBVc1QUg1DnlXa?dl=0](https://www.dropbox.com/sh/rvx6kjpwn3tnbxw/AAAmPzfUnp5nBVc1QUg1DnlXa?dl=0)

Or you can mail these to:

SeedBroadcast UN | SILO | ED
Po Box 126
Anton Chico, NM 87711
USA

Please be sure to label all your participating materials so we know who/what to credit! We will not be returning any of these materials, so please do not send originals. At the end of our residency in June, we will archive all these materials with the hope of presenting this work again in the future.



SOURCING OUR SEEDS

BELLE STARR & BILL MCDORMAN

One of the best things about winter is opening up a new seed catalog and poring over the array of beautiful offerings and photos. Nothing can transform a dreary, stormy winter day more than dreaming of gorgeous gardens and fresh vegetables from our backyards come summer. Perusing seed catalogs not only offers hope for a warmer, more delicious and inviting future, but can be an adventure in seed education as well.

Many of us put organic on the top of our list of important considerations when purchasing seeds. But how many of us think about where those seeds are being grown and how they get to the seed companies? And what exactly does “organic” mean anymore? The term organic now has a pretty complicated set of standards associated with it and can only be applied by farmers and producers who are certified through an independent agency approved by the USDA. Interestingly, the National Organic Program (NOP) has a 5% tolerance level for the presence of pesticide residues detected in organic produce compromising the integrity of the organic designation. GMO residues are not allowed in food or seed production however no federal agency, including the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) or USDA has established tolerance levels for the inadvertent presence of GMOs so it is an ambiguous rule at best. Organic farmers are required to source organic seeds for their crops, if they can be found. If not, then non-treated, non-GMO seed is acceptable.

Organic food and seeds are still our best protection against the chemicals and toxins of industrial agriculture. As demand for organic food increases, the scale of organic production increases as well. While organic products continue to skyrocket in popularity and sales (some \$35.1 billion in 2013 representing a 12% increase from 2012 according to Time Magazine), the big question is: where will farmers get their seeds? Therein lies the rub. Although there are nonprofit organizations working on larger scale organic seed production, it is the “corporate” seed producers who are scaling up to supply the burgeoning organic marketplace.

So, where do our seeds come from? They often come from thousands of miles away, produced

by large agri-chemical corporations like Seminis and Bejo. Many of our old-time favorite seed companies, while they may grow some seed, predominantly sourced from other places. They have been put in the position of trying to keep up with the demand and have been successful growing into multi-million dollar operations, sourcing from large corporate entities.

Recently we met a small organic seed grower (operating on around 300 acres) whose contract was terminated with one of these “favorite” seed catalog companies after many years because the grower can’t provide the volume of seeds now needed by this growing enterprise. The catalog seed company is going elsewhere.

You may notice a category in catalogs called “Plant Variety Protected (PVP).” This is not a new category for catalog seed companies, but it is one that is being highlighted more because of the growing revival of seed savers. Growers may save the seed, but they cannot share or sell it. Remarkably, PVP seeds may also be labeled as organic—so now how do we make the best decisions when sourcing seed?

Another category worth noting is hybrid organic seed. Although hybrid seed is not impossible to save, it takes a bit more know-how and usually requires up to

eight growing seasons to “stabilize” a line. Hybrid seed is the first-generation offspring (F1) from two distinctly different parents. To get the same quality crop, gardeners must purchase fresh seed every year.

Thinking in terms of “seed-sheds” should be as much of a priority as foodsheds, watersheds and other ways in which we define our bioregions. Sourcing our seeds locally has great benefit, and the importance of growing local seeds cannot be over-emphasized. As with our food, when we buy our seeds we are supporting a whole agricultural system—organic or not.

Ultimately, the real scrutiny comes when we can look in the eyes of our farmers, get to know them

well, and learn about their growing practices. In addition to querying them about their production methods (sustainable, certified organic, beyond organic) now another question needs to be asked: “Where do you get your seeds?”

A new movement is underway to strengthen regional seed diversity and production. Truly local seed companies are working toward creating cooperatives to provide stock seed, in addition to sourcing elsewhere. Farmers are beginning to recognize the value of producing their own seed as they take the best of the current season’s harvest into next year’s crop production.

Seed libraries are a rising trend nationwide and are now several hundred strong. Often seed libraries are being housed within public libraries. This is an inspiring movement and a path to true sustainability—locally adapted seeds, collectively cultivated and freely exchanged.

Bringing production back to “small and local” allows us to focus on ecological niches. What is implied is that the smaller we make our agriculture, the better it will be for creating a model that is sustainable and can help revitalize local diversity—especially where seeds are concerned.

We are now at a point where four companies (Monsanto, Dupont, Syngenta, and Bayer) own and control 78% of the world’s seeds. These companies dominate the world’s food production and the industrial agriculture that fuels it.

The good news is that home gardeners and small farmers are still mostly off the radar in terms of producing their own seed. The seeds that are purchased for smaller scale operations and hobbyists are not genetically modified (however that doesn’t mean that we won’t find some genetic drift from an already GMO-dominated marketplace).

A Seed Steward is an individual who is committed to preserving and sharing seed diversity. The Rocky Mountain Seed Alliance wants to connect with existing seed savers and inspire all gardeners and farmers to join the ancient tradition of seed stewardship.

In an article in January of 2104, Wired Magazine reported on Monsanto’s new foray into traditional, non-GMO vegetable seed production. One would assume they have their eye on the organic market as well.

How this plays out and what communities decide to do to overcome some of these challenges is still up for grabs. It may seem complicated, but the answer

might be as simple as creating a regional seed solution model where farmers and seed producers

collaborate to provide stock seed needed for various areas. Thankfully, there are tremendous resources available and great groups working on these solutions. The Rocky Mountain Seed Alliance (RMSA) is proud to be part of this flowering movement.

Siskiyou Seeds of Williams, OR (siskiyouseeds.com) is a great example of a bio-regional seed company growing locally adapted seeds, and breeding their own for the distinct characteristics that work well in the Pacific North West. When they need other seed or to fill out their offerings, they list the seed companies supplying that seed and are completely transparent. Hats off to Don Tipping and his team!



BELLE STARR IS CO-FOUNDER OF THE ROCKY MOUNTAIN SEED ALLIANCE. STARR IS THE FORMER DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF NATIVE SEEDS/SEARCH, A 32 YEAR-OLD SEED CONSERVATION ORGANIZATION. STARR ALONG WITH HER HUSBAND BILL MCDORMAN DEVELOPED THE GROUND-BREAKING SEED SAVING PROGRAM, SEED SCHOOL WHICH HAS GRADUATED OVER 600 PEOPLE FROM AROUND THE WORLD. SEED SCHOOL, NOW IN ITS 5TH YEAR IS THE FLAGSHIP EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM OF THE ROCKY MOUNTAIN SEED ALLIANCE.

BILL MCDORMAN IS EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR AND CO-FOUNDER OF THE ROCKY MOUNTAIN SEED ALLIANCE (RMSA). HE WAS PREVIOUS DIRECTOR OF NATIVE SEEDS/SEARCH IN TUCSON. BILL FOUNDED 3 SEED COMPANIES INCLUDING HIGH ALTITUDE GARDENS AND CO-FOUNDED SEVERAL NON-PROFITS INCLUDING THE SAWTOOTH BOTANICAL GARDEN IN HAILEY, IDAHO. HE IS AUTHOR OF BASIC SEED SAVING WHICH HE WROTE IN 1994.

"SOURCING OUR SEEDS" ORIGINALLY APPEARED IN THE 2015 EDUCATION ISSUE OF COLORADO GARDENER, COLORADOGARDENER.COM

PHOTO CREDIT:

TOP RIGHT: DON TIPPING AND A CLASS AT HIS SEED ACADEMY.

BOTTOM RIGHT: SEED SCHOOL AT ONSEN FARM IN SOUTHERN IDAHO IN NOVEMBER 2014, WITH BILL MCDORMAN AT LEFT FRONT.

TO HEAR BELLE'S SEED STORY GO TO:
[SOUNDCLOUD.COM/SEEDBROADCAST/
BELLE-STARR-DEPUTY-DIRECTOR-OF](https://soundcloud.com/seedbroadcast/belle-starr-deputy-director-of)

TO HEAR BILL'S SEED STORY GO TO:
[SOUNDCLOUD.COM/SEEDBROADCAST/
BILL-MCDORMAN-SHARES-HIS-SEED](https://soundcloud.com/seedbroadcast/bill-mcdorman-shares-his-seed)





HORTICULTURE

BRIAN JOHNSTONE

We make a garden in our lives
much as we pursue them;

coming young to seed beds, growth,
our interest waning only

at the time things take to grow,
not recognising brevity in seasons

but in days we would extend
to absence from our chores, defiant,

digging in our heels; still,
in need of sheds to smoke behind

as now we need one for a store,
to pot up for the years' advance.

While hardy, perennial, we trust
in middle age to lay out beds,

rake over soil, and watch as
bulbs sprout, shoots poke through

repeating patterns till
we know them in our hearts,

so much that they enclose us,
edge us, bed us in, tamp down

the earth where we'd have never
thought we would take root.

No matter. Here the cuttings prove,
the compost has the time to cure,

the lawns and borders, benches, paths
take on personality, bring life

into the open; where we see it,
recognise for what it is

the falling petal, browning leaf,
the dead head on the rose bush

which burst with life last week.
Such that we plant out more

spread muck around the roots,
heel in still one more sapling,

prick out row on row
of native species, shrubs, exotics,

piling on, like flowering plants,
the blossom as our season wanes,

to make a show that final time
before the early frosts seep in

to claim us all. But leaving progeny,
a garden, favoured in our minds:

a dream we'll not wake up from,
not even with the spring.

BRIAN JOHNSTONE LIVES IN FIFE, SCOTLAND. HE IS A POET, WRITER AND PERFORMER. HE IS THE HONORABLE PRESIDENT OF STANZA POETRY FESTIVAL AND HAS BEEN RECOGNIZED AS A SIGNIFICANT SCOTTISH POET WITH "A MATURE AND CONSIDERED VOICE." HIS POEMS HAVE BEEN TRANSLATED INTO MORE THAN TEN DIFFERENT LANGUAGES AND HE HAS PUBLISHED TWO FULL COLLECTIONS AND THREE PAMPHLETS, AS WELL AS APPEARING IN ANTHOLOGIES AND OTHER PUBLICATIONS IN THE UK, EUROPE AND THE AMERICAS.

BRIANJOHNSTONEPOET.CO.UK

MILKWEED, MISTRESS OF THE GARDEN

KELLY BERRY

In spring she jumps up, staking her claim in every garden, hoping to get to stay all season.



Come June, residency established, she dons her best party dress and waits for her friends to arrive at her garden parties. In Texas, her favorite dress is often green and white; out on the prairie, a

bright orange; in Chicago, the softest pink. The liveliest parties are the ones where Wild Bergamot and Coneflower and Black-Eyed Susan also attend. Wild Bergamot's bee-friends show up and amuse everyone with their dancing and talent for matchmaking.

Wherever Milkweed throws her garden parties, her good friends the Monarch butterflies stop by on their annual travels to Mexico, leaving their children behind in her care for the summer. Only Milkweed knows the secret to feeding and nurturing these baby Monarchs.

In the fall, another season of baby butterflies raised to the sky, her thoughts turn to her own children. She cracks open her pods at the precise moment, unleashing clouds of silken possibility into the air, and then watches amused as the wind and all us animals do her work for her.

Grab a handful of milkweed silk in your hand and gaze down at it. You might feel like a space giant holding a handful of stars. Place it in your beau's beard and giggle at him. Launch a handful of silken stars to drift down a Pilsen sidewalk and dream of next year's butterflies and garden parties.

KELLY BERRY RUNS THE VERY SEEDY GARDEN OF WONDERS IN PILSEN, CHICAGO. THIS PIECE ORIGINALLY APPEARED IN A ZINE PUBLISHED BY PUEBLO SEMILLA, PILSEN'S VERY OWN NEIGHBORHOOD SEED LIBRARY.



SAEB (1590-1676)

What but remorse
can a seed, unplanted, give?

TRANSLATED FROM THE PERSIAN BY REZA SABERI AND ROBIN MAGOWAN

REZA SABERI TRANSLATES PERSIAN POETRY. HE LIVES IN NORTH DAKOTA. ROBIN MAGOWAN IS A POET AND TRANSLATOR WHO LIVES AND GARDENS IN SANTA FE, NEW MEXICO.

CONSECRATION TO THE LIFE FORCE ALEJANDRO LÓPEZ

In the last several years since I moved from a large city back to our old small family farm on the edge of a nearly forgotten northern New Mexican town, I have been busy cultivating a powerful relationship not only with the house that my father and brothers built in the early nineteen forties and where I grew up, but also with the old garden plot that used to deliver one tidal wave of harvest after another. In the process of forging these old relationships, I have also had to reacquaint myself and develop similar kinds of respect for everything else that I see and touch.

I have especially devoted much time and energy developing a sense of reverence, approaching adoration, for Chicoma Peak or Obsidian Mountain as it is also known and which lies due west from our family ranchito. It is one of four neighboring peaks held sacred by my Tewa Indian neighbors and undoubtedly, by my own indigenous ancestors in the past, and with due cause; it is nothing short of magnificent.

Each morning at dawn I greet its lofty rose-colored summit, at times capped with snow and at times not. During the day, as I go in and out of the house a million times, I study this majestic being as it puts on and sheds layers of mist, fog and clouds and goes in and out of mighty storms

and incendiary belts of lightning. Inevitably, on the following day, it awakens in its usual grand millennial repose and ineffable splendor. Painted in the richest of blue-purple hues, it emanates the life-giving energy that it absorbed on the previous day in the form of rain or snow, or both.

In the evening after I have quite deliberately said good-bye to the sun which I also revere like some unrepentant Egyptian peasant from Pharaonic times, I take up the ascending moon and stars as my objects of blissful contemplation and wonderment. I no longer take for granted these luminous heavenly bodies in perpetual motion such as I did when I was a young man and full of myself. This may be because, already finding myself halfway through my sixth decade, I am well aware that I do not have an endless stream of the "nothing short of miraculous" displays of flawless acrobatics in the sky that these celestial bodies put on every day. Beyond their beauty, I must remember that they have also served humanity throughout all of its history as clock, calendar and as compass or map.

Other changes have occurred as well since I mustered the courage to leave the great cement-saturated commercial metropolises of the East Coast and retire to the outback of Santa Cruz

de la Cañada where a bit of life yet holds out and where I must do my part to help it along. Not since I was a child has the literal earth spoken to me in such a clear and audible tone or with such intensity despite my occasional callousness and lack of attention. Nevertheless, I try to answer back in kind.

In the early springtime my heart swells with the prospect of turning the moist, rich soil over and burying the seeds that for generations have cascaded down a line of eager, awaiting hands, deep into the earth's warm bosom. Just the sight of the emerald seedlings popping up out of the ground and receiving their first drink of water and sunlight is compensation enough for any effort that I might have made to plant them and get their young lives going.

The water I give them emerges from the hidden springs and the slow, drop-by-drop snow melt which runs down the sides of the high sierras such as Chicoma or Truchas Peak. Thanks to the effort of my ancestors, it makes its way down precarious mountainsides along the serpentine acequias' earthen troughs and watercourses until it finally reaches our fields several miles from where it first began its journey. Here, it gradually sinks into the ground where the seeds lie quietly in waiting



and where it performs the magic of quickening them to life. Indeed, there is no substance quite like water which in its transparent, forever-restless and gurgling state goes about happily filling the world with endless shade, beauty and delight.

Within a week of sprouting, the plants cover the earth with their iridescent green mantle and I am irresistibly drawn to their side like a mother or nurse, friend or lover. "How," I ask, "was it possible that for so many years living in the big cities, I had been content to nourish my hunger for sap and chlorophyll on mostly lifeless paper which dominated my life in the form of memos and bills, and occasionally as literature?" It is obvious now, that when I used to reach out with my hands for a piece of paper upon which to jot down a grocery list or some poem of yearning or loss, how, in reality, I was reaching for the long sinuous leaves of the corn plants that had been my childhood companions. I no longer hesitate to run toward my highly prized corn plants growing in the field when, alerted by a breeze, I see them extend their lithe arms toward me, wave, and bid me to get closer. These days, with frequency, we find ourselves standing beside one another talking openly about the weather, community matters or about how much we love and care for each other.

After a summer or half-summer's worth of work, every few days I am gifted with a new wave of a different kind of fruit approaching total fullness of shape and color as well as of a bursting kind of ripeness. When, with a bucket or basket, I go out and pluck the season's fruits and vegetables, I am aware that, aside from the germ of life that hid within the seed, I am also harvesting the concentrated essence of air, earth, fire and water without which the process of life begetting other life ad infinitum could not occur. Nor does it escape me, that I am simultaneously gathering and, rather incredulously, holding in my hands what is about to become a part of my body and its many highly specialized organs as well as my consciousness, once I bite into that irresistibly delicious-looking bright red tomato.

In the winter time, I occupy myself with the preparation of delicious soups incorporating the food-stuffs that I was able to put away from the garden and which I happily share with friends and strangers alike. And, lest I forget that the earth is only sleeping and not dead, I cultivate any number of plants indoors so that I can continue my conversation with them. Each morning, I look forward to flinging the curtains open, admiring them and inhaling something of their life force together with that of the rising sun.

I am, however, aware that the slow, deliberate life that I choose to live wherein I make every attempt to be awake to everything that is before me, is taking place against a very different kind of background. As a constant reader, I am only too aware of the accelerating decimation of our planet in an unbridled orgy of power, greed and consumerism. In such a world, neither seeds nor the earth nor any of the other heavenly bodies are met with with any special kind of regard, let alone with the the awe and reverence that they naturally should elicit from us.

Similarly human beings in places as diverse as northern New Mexico, Big City, Anywhere, USA,

Ciudad Juarez and Iguala, Mexico, Paris, Africa and the Middle East are being subjected to the worst kinds of inhumanity, torture and death. How important it is then, that at this historic moment of blatant disregard for life, we make every attempt to preserve at the very least, a glimmer of that understanding that tells us that life is sacred and that we must do everything within our capacity to protect it if not to revere it.

ALEJANDRO LÓPEZ IS A WRITER AND PHOTOGRAPHER FROM NORTHERN NEW MEXICO.





A SEED EXCHANGE IS PURE JOY

NAN FISCHER

The Taos, New Mexico Seed Exchange sprouted in January 2013. As I wondered what to do with my ever-expanding seed stash, I came across two organizations that inspired me. I took ideas from Eating in Public in Hawaii and the Richmond CA seed library, Richmond Grows Seed Lending Library to create a hybrid for my quirky agricultural community.

I embraced the ideas of sharing and recycling. The Taos Seed Exchange became a perpetual seed swap for home gardeners. Seed exchange stations were made of recycled boxes and furniture, and they were set up in progressive businesses around the region. They provided places for gardeners to share their seed stashes and trade for something new throughout the growing season.

MAGIC AND SHARING

This project has been built with magic and the goodness of gardeners. Whatever I've needed has come graciously and easily, be it seeds, supplies, stamina, brainstorming, venues or problem solving. If I ever had a question, it was answered quickly. I felt like a catalyst for the universe to get seed to local gardeners. It was that effortless.

Along with seed, I also disseminated gardening information. As people caught on to the dangers of GMOs and pesticides, they wanted to learn how to grow their own food. They felt it was safer.

I fielded a lot of Gardening 101 type questions and helped many new gardeners get started. They grew and bloomed throughout the season. They were fearless and excited about experimenting. They learned how to sow seed in spring, put up food for winter, and everything in between. I was honored to be a part of their joy!

The Taos Seed Exchange was built on donations. Seed companies and local gardeners donated hundreds of pounds of seed the first year. The second year was bigger, and this year, I have a small storeroom full of donated seed!

Now people around the country are contacting me for seed to start their own exchanges and libraries. I have been happy to pay it forward and donate to get them on their way. Sharing is key.

INSPIRED

The Taos Seed Exchange is in its 3rd season and continues to expand. If it sprouted two years ago, I'd say its first true leaves are now showing. There is much to look forward to, and I will coax it along with good nutrients, light and warmth.

I held a small seed swap to celebrate National Seed Swap Day on January 31st. Now I am energized about the coming year! I met gardeners new to the area eager to take on the challenges of our harsh growing conditions. I connected with colleagues to create more events, and I shared a lot of seed and gardening advice.

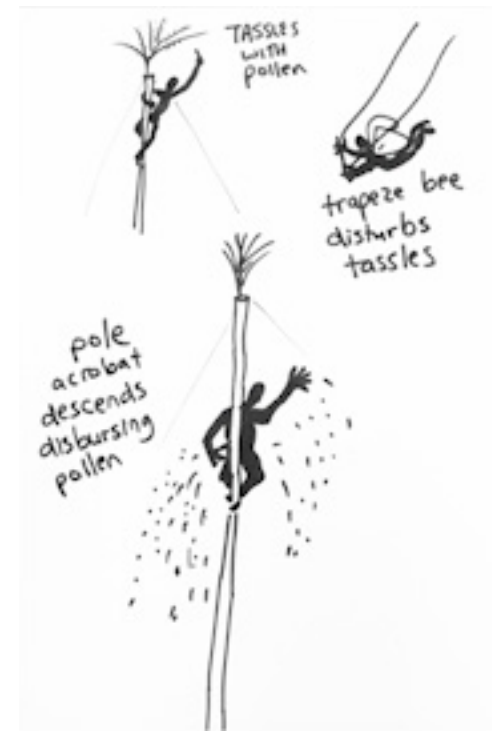
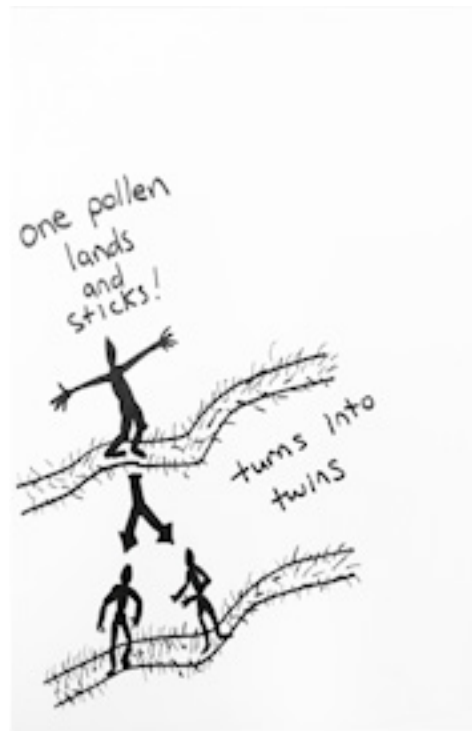
Gardeners are a good lot. I am grateful for and warmed by everyone I have met. I feel blessed by the generous offerings of organizations such as Eating in Public, the Richmond Seed Lending Library, the Cleveland Seed Bank, Native Seeds/SEARCH, SEED (Semillas Españolas Ecológicas en Deposito), and every seed company and seed farmer that has made a donation or that I have had a conversation with.

The businesses hosting the seed exchange stations are as passionate and excited about this venture as I am. Gardeners everywhere inspire me to keep learning and growing. This has truly been a community effort!

The Taos Seed Exchange is the most gratifying project I have ever been involved in. It's heartwarming, fun and full of love. It is pure joy.

NAN FISCHER HAS BEEN PLAYING IN THE DIRT FOR MOST OF HER SIX DECADES. SHE HAS A DEGREE IN HORTICULTURE FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF NEW HAMPSHIRE, BUT HAD TO RELEARN HOW TO GARDEN WHEN SHE CAME WEST ALMOST 30 YEARS AGO. SHE HAS WORKED ON FARMS LARGE AND SMALL, BEEN A LANDSCAPER, GROWS MUCH OF HER OWN FOOD, AND HAS A PENCHANT FOR NATIVE PLANTS. NAN IS A HOME AND GARDEN WRITER, BUT IS AN ESSAYIST AT HEART. THE NORTHERN NEW MEXICO GARDENING COMMUNITY BRINGS HER GREAT JOY.

TAOS SEED EXCHANGE
SWEETLYSEEDS.COM



VANISHING RACES OF MAIZE OR VANQUISHING THE MASTER CORN RACE

JOHN MCLEOD

The Corn Sex Drawings are part of an elaborate storyboard created by John McLeod for the Circus of BioMimicry = Circo BioLoco. This community corn circus "Vanishing Races of Corn" will take place during the Avant Garde Circus Festival and Skills Camp, Circo Mermejita, the Mermaid Circus of Barcelona with All Species Day in Mazunte, Oaxaca, Mesoamerica.

JOHN MCLEOD IS A RETIRED ACTIVIST EDUCATOR WHO IS CURRENTLY WORKING FULL TIME IN CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT AT HELIOS SCHOOL IN CALIFORNIA. IN ADDITION TO RUNNING THE IMAGINE LAB AND WILDERNESS VILLAGE, JOHN IS COORDINATING THE CURRENT EXPEDITION, TINY HOMES, BIG HEARTS, A 5 MONTH CURRICULUM PARTNERSHIP WITH CITY OF HOLLISTER TO DEVELOP A TINY HOMES COMMUNITY FOR HOMELESS.

ALLSPECIESPROJECTS.COM

ALLSPECIESMUSIC.WORDPRESS.COM

GUARDING THE SOURCE OF LIFE

JESSIE EMERSON



In 2013 heard my heroine Dr. Vandana Shiva speak at the 8th annual Traditional Agriculture & Sustainable Living Conference in Española, New Mexico. Dr. Shiva is a physicist, environmental activist, eco-feminist and champion of diversity. She speaks out against genetic manipulation of seeds, patenting of seeds, and has stood face to face with Monsanto officials arguing against their immoral practices. Through her endless crusading, the seed is becoming the symbol of freedom and resistance to centralized control of agriculture and for the right of the individual to collect and save seeds.

Gardeners and farmers worldwide have been selecting and saving seeds since the beginning of agriculture. Plant selection by gardeners and farmers continue to be vital for conserving genetic resources for producing crop varieties best suited for local needs. Former VP of the World Bank, Ismail Serageldin said, "Conserving genetic resources is a challenge for all humanity."

Seeds are our birthright as citizens of Earth. A circle with a dot inside is the Chinese symbol for seed. The Sanskrit word "bija" means the source of life. Inside each seed is life. Each one contains enough food and enzymes to last thru dormancy to their first few days as a seedling until they develop their root system. Humans and seeds

evolved together. Each depends on the other. Seeds also remind us of traditional values, sharing, nurturing and celebration. We can all have our own seed bank and share with our friends. In my seed bag, I carry seeds from medicine and food plants. This bag goes with me wherever I travel.

Any laws that prohibit seed saving and promotes seed patenting are immoral and unjust. Dr. Shiva reminds us of what Mahatma Ghandi said, "If a law is unjust it must not be obeyed."

JESSIE IS A CERTIFIED CLINICAL HERBALIST AND REGISTERED NURSE. SHE HAS GARDENED SINCE HER MOTHER HELPED HER PLANT WHEN SHE WAS 3 YEARS OLD. JESSIE LIVES IN NORTHERN NEW MEXICO IN A LITTLE PLACE CALLED CRANES' WAY. AT CRANES' WAY THERE IS CONSCIOUS COOPERATION WITH THE NATURE KINGDOMS WITH A DREAM TO RECONNECT PEOPLE TO NATURE.

NOURISHING OURSELVES, NOURISHING LIFE

CHRISTIE GREEN

“What do you mean, show body parts?”

“Like arm, leg, head...like that?”

The DeVargas Middle School students—all 80 of them—blew me away with their perceptive take on humans and plants, their physiological parts and what these parts need to survive and thrive. The questions first asked when I began the day's workshop in December were quickly transformed into uniquely artful, intelligent three-dimensional representations of life.

As a Food Justice artist-in-residence, SFAI invited me to work with a group of teacher Chris Slakey's students from DeVargas Middle School to explore ideas around food justice. Understanding the narrow window of opportunity—one day and 80 kids—we needed to explore quickly yet hopefully experience something with lasting impact.

My intent for the workshop was to somehow offer opportunity for a visceral “a ha” about plants, humans, food, life and death and our systems for survival and thriving. Rather than consider food justice as an option or something that is up to someone in power to give to another person or community, I propose that food justice is actually biological—a fact and right of life—that is in our own hands and is up to each one of us to assert and activate.

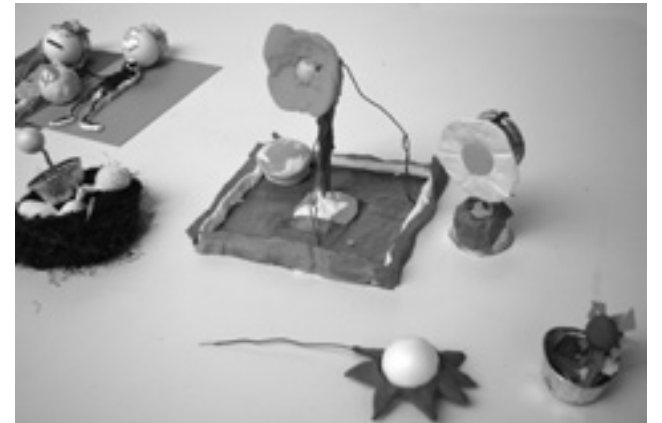
To weave food, art, education, life and death into one workshop was ambitious but ultimately a

blast. With the luscious winter squash (Calabasa mexicana) provided by Alexis Elton of Gemini Farms, as food and art prompt, I roasted the squash flesh and seeds and also made a creamy squash soup, all of which we shared for lunch during the workshop. I also saved many squash seeds identifying the physical characteristics of the squash for the students to then choose which seeds they wanted to plant in 2.5" pots for their own personal future germination and cultivation of the plant they had just ingested.

“Oooo”, one girl exclaimed, seemingly squeamish about placing her fingers into “dirty” soil to push the seeds in, “How am I supposed to do this?” “How deep does it go?” “How much soil do I cover it with?” “How much water should we give them?” “Will I really be able to grow my own squash?”

As planting the squash seeds was a means to explore the cycles of life and death—the fruit being transformed into savory nutrients we ate, and the seed being planted for future production—we also played with art as a way to express ideas about life and death, nutrients and basic needs.

In two different groups utilizing diverse and random materials on-hand, some kids collaboratively fabricated three-dimensional representations of



plants, their parts, and what they need to survive and thrive, while other kids constructed humans and their equivalent parts.

Finally, the groups stood before all of us to share their pieces, what each component represented and what they thought about similarities and differences between humans and plants and all living organisms' needs.

Not surprisingly, the students astounded me with their ability to articulate complex ideas, especially about relationship among organisms and whole systems. For example, rather than simply show one plant with the roots, stem, leaves and flower called out, the kids showed the forest, the birds, the pollinators and fungus that the individual plant depended on to thrive. The human representations showed couples, families and homes—even souls, emotions and spirits—implying the need for support, community and healthy “insides” to survive.

These children know and understand much about food, about nourishment, about life and how we thrive. This opportunity to share their knowledge and deepen their understanding about cycles and relationships was really more of an opportunity for me to see through new eyes. What I take for granted as familiar territory—growing, cooking and sharing food—became an enlivened “a ha” for me through the artful, fresh minds of these youth. “Can we take these home?” they asked of the little pots with seeds. “Of course, but only if you promise to take care of them and take care of yourselves, your bodies, your minds, your communities.” Share your food, your art, your ideas, your playfulness. This is living food justice.

CHRISTIE GREEN HAS CONSULTED WITH INDIVIDUALS, SCHOOLS, PLANT NURSERIES AND PUBLIC AGENCIES TO EDUCATE ABOUT THE IMPORTANCE OF HEIRLOOM EDIBLE LANDSCAPES, NATIVE PLANT SPECIES, WATER CONSERVATION, SOIL-BUILDING, AND INNOVATIVE LAND REGENERATION TECHNIQUES AND LANDSCAPE DESIGN, DEVELOPMENT AND EDUCATION FOR NON-PROFIT AND COMMERCIAL CLIENTS.

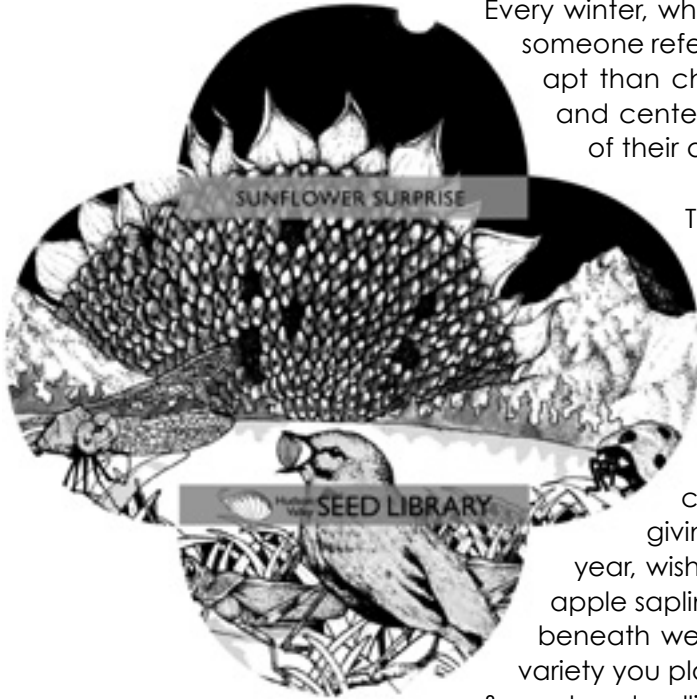
BERADICLE.COM

IMAGE CREDITS:
TOP RIGHT: CHRISTIE GREEN
MIDDLE RIGHT: KEITH GROSBECK
BOTTOM LEFT: KEITH GROSBECK



GLOSSY GARDEN PORN

KEN GREENE



Every winter, when the fields are frozen and we're busy packing seeds, we catch wind of someone referring to their pile of glossy seed catalogs as "garden porn". The term is more apt than cheeky. These slick catalogs are filled with photos of unblemished veggies and centerfold scenes of fecund harvests accompanied by hyperbolic descriptions of their assets.

The pornographic pages used to lure me into a fantasy where veggies aren't blighted and butts don't have pimples. But sex is rarely what is portrayed in pornography and my farm rarely produces plants that look like what I see in most catalogs or on seed envelopes. As far as I'm concerned, this is a good thing, on both counts.

Every farm or garden is a story with its own tragedy, slapstick, drama, sex, death, and delicious redemption. Where are the catalogs that communicate the stories of losing all your Brussels Sprouts over night to one woodchuck, giving a hummingbird a bath with the hose, finding self-sown volunteers from last year, wishing for rain, wishing for sun, having a stand-off with a young buck over an apple sapling, listening to pollinators, being stung, finding a lost ripe musk melon hidden beneath weeds, watching helplessly as your tomatoes rot from blight, forgetting what variety you planted and having to wait two months to find out, flitting from open flower to flower hand-pollinating with a freshly picked male stamen, sitting down to a meal your grew yourself, blemishes and all?

Over time I came to believe that these are the experiences that make my farm real. More than that, I realized that I wanted to keep things down to earth with our seed company.

As I learned more about the modern seed industry I began to see past the airbrushed transplants and photo-shopped stills in the seed catalogs. I found that the true face of the industry was not so pretty. Many catalogs cover-up where their seeds come from, how they are grown, and who owns the brand name. Most seed companies get their seeds from large scale monocrop seed farms using pesticides, herbicides, and soil-wasting farming practices. Looking deeper I found that a few multinational corporations, mostly biotech, own the bulk of seed sources. I realized that my seed dollar spent at a familiar seed catalog, even one offering heirlooms, could very well be supporting the likes of Monsanto.

When it came time to design our seed packaging and website and figure out how to get the word out about our seeds, I knew I needed to do it differently from conventional catalogs. I wanted honesty, transparency, and to communicate the stories of our seeds.

When we first came up with the idea of using original artwork from different artists for the covers of our seed packs, some people suggested that it would be better to stick to what everyone else does, photos. But we wanted our packs to communicate something more about the seeds they hold. The artwork reflects the diversity of the seeds we grow and suggests that each seed comes with a creative cultural story.

Since I don't expect the garden porn industry to change anytime soon, I believe we have to make our own change. For me this meant learning how to save seeds, finding a creative way to share seeds with other gardeners, and eventually becoming a seed farmer. My partner and I started the Hudson Valley Seed Library— getting seeds into the dirty hands of caring gardeners without the help of glossy garden porn.

And now, with our first full print catalog, we've used only real photos of our varieties growing on our farm, in our trial gardens, and in some cases, in the gardens of folks who grow with our seeds. You may see some flea beetle bites taken out of leaves, some dirt in our fingernails, or some cracks in the tomatoes. But these are the perfect imperfections- the wabi-sabi of a real garden.

Of course, I'm not saying you have to throw out your stash of mags, maybe this year's catalogs will give you some new ideas to try in the privacy of your own home garden. I do hope, though, that you won't compare your performance in the field to what you see in the slick overproduced pages of your conventional seed catalogs. Instead, I hope you discover that what you have, your garden, your farm, your story, has more beauty, flavor, spice, and perfection than can be captured by a glib description or a camera's click.

We welcome the farmers and gardeners who sow our seeds to share their garden's story with us, in any form, poetry, prose, microfiction, recipes, how-to, hard hitting journalism, rants, humor, photos, or art. Over time, these submissions will fill the Seed Library catalog and blog with realness, helping us stay grounded. Stay seedy!

KEN GREENE IS A SEEDSMAN, SEED FARMER, AND FOUNDER OF THE HUDSON VALLEY SEED LIBRARY, A PROJECT HE GERMINATED IN A SMALL TOWN LIBRARY THAT HAS NOW BLOSSOMED INTO A SEED COMPANY AND SEED FARM. GREENE HAS SPENT THE LAST DECADE PRODUCING HEIRLOOM AND OPEN-POLLINATED SEED, FOSTERING A SEED-SAVING COMMUNITY, AND CELEBRATING SEEDS THROUGH ART. HE IS ON THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS FOR ORGANIC SEED ALLIANCE AND HAS GIVEN PRESENTATIONS AT THE NOFA-NY CONFERENCE, SEED SAVERS EXCHANGE, YOUNG FARMERS CONFERENCE, CULINARY INSTITUTE OF AMERICA, ORGANIC SEED CONFERENCE, NATIONAL HEIRLOOM EXPO, CORNELL AND MANY OTHER ORGANIZATIONS.

TO HEAR KEN'S SEED STORY GO TO:
[SOUNDCLOUD.COM/SEEDBROADCAST/
KEN-GREENE-FROM-THE-HUDSON](https://soundcloud.com/seedbroadcast/ken-greene-from-the-hudson)

CALL FOR PACK ART:

At the Hudson Valley Seed Library we believe that artists are cultural seed savers and seed savers are agricultural artists. Just as we select and save seeds on our farm, artists select which kernels of beauty, color, concept, and form to keep alive and pass on to future generations. To celebrate this creative intersection of arts and agriculture, we commission artists to interpret the varieties in our seed catalog. Each work of art—watercolor, embroidery, porcelain, stained glass, collage and more, becomes a unique seed pack. The artwork celebrates the beauty, diversity, and cultural importance of the seeds held within each pack. Thank you for helping us keep the culture in agriculture.

If you would like to apply to be a pack artist, sign up for our newsletter or join us on Facebook. We'll post the submission form in mid February. Artists receive a commission, are featured on a seed pack, and are part of our traveling Art of the Heirloom gallery exhibition.

seedlibrary.org/pack-artist/



ART & FARMING START WITH A SEED:

THE HUBBARD SQUASH PROJECT

ALEXIS ELTON

LANDRACE a local cultivated variety that has been improved by traditional agricultural methods.



Some think of a seed as the origin of an idea. To others, to plant a seed is a motive for sharing a meal or the continuation of a story. The seed of this project became a social commitment forming a new awareness of this food source and the impetus for extending communities.

Last spring, four growers across the U.S. received a package containing seeds and a manual on the story of a 300-year-old landrace variety of Hubbard squash native to Northern New Mexico. The seeds became a contract between the grower and the continuation of food security, allowing a new narrative to be generated. The farmers that received the seeds were invited to cultivate the historic Hubbard-variety squash seeds, and to document with photographs the process throughout the season. They were asked to write a description of themselves, their farm and region, and the type of soil on their land. They reflected on food security in their communities and described their experience with the crop, which they documented the growth of through photography.

The documentation culminated in an exhibit at the Santa Fe Art Institute, where the growers' records and reflections, workshops with local children, and squash and soil samples from participating farms were presented as the culmination of my Food Justice Residency. The residency was a multi-faceted exploration of food justice centered on this Landrace Hubbard Squash. Another aspect of the Hubbard Squash Project was to introduce the story behind this seed to young children to further food security (see story on page 16).

At the end of the growing season and residency, I hosted a dinner in my Chimayo studio honoring the Three Sisters: corn, beans & squash. The guests were artists, local growers & neighbors. The evening began with digging out squash that had been pit fired and performers danced with oversized wooden spoons in the field illustrating ideas of distribution. Inside, the guests sanded their wooded spoons before eating to experience the nature of the handmade while soup was served in squash bowls. A form of social practice.

"Farmscapes" are visual landscapes that sustain the spirit, while functioning as dynamic operations that sustain communities by providing food and sustenance, the convergence of Art and Agriculture. The focus lies in how communities explore this concept in both the visual and functional level with a sensitivity to open space, visual currency, and food output.

This Hubbard-variety seed is an example of social commitment: a dedicated relationship between the farm site, seed, land, farmers, and the ever-increasing community population. Providing an opportunity for others to bring food to their expanding communities, encourages a form of food justice. These relationships become an extension of a personal art practice because working with the ideas of social dynamics has influenced the materials used in the art studio. Being involved in growing food and distributing it locally, enables this process to grow exponentially within other communities.

Here are two stories from participating farmers about their experience growing this historic squash on their “farmscapes,” and the relationships that grew alongside it.

Mike Nolan
of Mountain
Roots Produce
in the
Mancos Valley
Colorado...



I have been farming for 9 years now and chose to move to the Mancos Valley because of its beauty, community, water and soil. I grow 3 acres of mainly storage vegetables in a clay loam soil. My irrigation water comes from the West slope of the La Plata mountains with Mancos river rights and Jackson lake rights. Our area is food insecure because of many reasons ranging from poverty, gap in ages of growers, climate, access to resources, etc. We have a lot of work to do when it comes to be food secure from increasing our efficiencies, acreage, and number of growers to looking at the food system as more than a few restaurants that buy local and a farmers market. The issue is complex and we have done a great job so far but we also need to continue to improve and not stop helping our food sheds.

I have been selling the squash at farmers market and to a few restaurants in Durango. They turn it into soups and pies and I encourage everyone from chefs to consumers to save the seed like I do and plant it!

Overall I love this crop. As I strive to find more resilience in the way I grow, from water usage to growing better soil, a crop such as this shows me how older land race strains can help us as we strive to be more resilient agrarians. This crop takes minimal water, produces a lot o weight per acre, stores well, shades the soil, I could go on an on. Not to mention it sells decently well once folks have tried it.

Thanks for letting me participate.

Jennie London
is farming
outside of
Portland, OR
in clay loam
soil...



I recently moved to the northwest from northern New Mexico, where I was able to experience growing the Trampas squash. I was excited to be a part of this project and see how this delicious and favored squash would fare in the northwest.

I currently manage a 20 acre CSA farm. My co-worker Emily offered to give me space at her farm in Gresham, OR to grow this squash. I had one, 150' bed on Emily's farm to care for, prep, plant, water and weed. I direct seeded the squash later in June after all the other squash transplants had been planted. Emily had never direct seeded squash and she called me one day shocked to see that the plants had grown bigger than any of the other varieties. We waited for flowers, hand pollinated a few plants, and waited for fruit. Then, again I got a second call. There is an enormous blue and pink squash! I have no idea where it came from! Emily had never seen a Hubbard with blue and pink striation and see one get to such an enormous size so fast. We ended up harvesting a nice sampling of 55 squash. We have decided to sell the squash at the farmers market and we stashed a few away for us to save for seed and to do a taste test. We are planning on keeping some seed for Emily's farm, offering some to other farmers through her farm incubator program and growing some at my farm for the CSA members next year.

Participating in this project reminded me of how the sharing of seeds is not only the sharing of food but, also the beginning of relationships. I began a relationship with Emily, her family and friends and a new place, a new land. Through seed, I was able to share stories, growing techniques and food with people in a new community in turn helping to create community. To me community is an essential element to food security. Food security requires food access, the ability for all people to have access to fresh, responsibly grown, and culturally appropriate food. The diversity by which, food, flavors, memories, conversations, and information are experienced, shared and continued are countless. I have focused on sharing seeds with farmers, neighbors in the incubator program, and other squash enthusiasts, slowly a social fabric forms around the Trampas Hubbard. A squash that had not been grown in the Portland area is now on market stands, sold to EBT members, baked by cooks and bakers, studied by farmers, questioned by the UPS man as I package it to send to New Mexico. All of a sudden Trampas squash is helping community members grow their gardens, and grow their food. Community gives us the pathways to food security.

Thank you Alexis!

THE STORY OF THE SEED

Over a decade ago the late Jose Leyba of Ojo Sarco, New Mexico passed on a few Hubbard type squash seed (*Cucurbita maxima*) to a group of farmers in Las Trampas, NM, to reproduce their own. These seeds continued to produce enough progeny squash to be able to select the most desirable squash for seed today. The growers selected the squash based on their preferred traits including color (solid pink and solid blue), density size, and crown-like disk shape. The results of selecting for these focused selection criteria also resulted in some surprises within the next crop generation.

This Hubbard seed strain is a landrace winter squash specific to the high country of Northern New Mexico tracing back to the Native Americans and the Spanish. It is an open pollinated seed coming from a huge genetic pool, an indigenous seed that was grown for subsistence and adaptability. Similar varieties of winter squash were associated with the three sisters crops; corn, beans and squash. Historically the locals of NM call it “Calabasa Mexicana.” They would cook the squash by building a fire in a pit and burying the squash in the dirt. Later, it was sliced, dried, and often used in trade and commerce with the Native Americans.

ALEXIS ELTON LIVES IN NORTHERN NEW MEXICO ON AN ORGANIC FARM. ALEXIS SEES MANY SIMILARITIES BETWEEN HER ART PRACTICE AND THE FARMING PROCESS INFLUENCING WORK AND THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SCULPTURE, LAND, INSTALLATION, AND SOCIAL DYNAMICS USING TRADITIONAL AND NON-TRADITIONAL MATERIALS. THE IMPACT IS CONCEPTUAL IN TERMS OF DECAY AND RENEWAL.

ALEXISELTON.COM



FIRST SEEDS

KYCE BELLO

KYCE BELLO EDITED THE ANTHOLOGY *THE RETURN OF THE RIVER: WRITERS, SCHOLARS, AND CITIZENS SPEAK ON BEHALF OF THE SANTA FE RIVER* WHICH RECEIVED TWO NEW MEXICO BOOK AWARDS. SHE WRITES AND TENDS HER HOME, GARDEN, FAMILY, AND COMMUNITY IN SANTA FE, NM.

PHOTO CREDIT: ERIN O'NEIL

SEEDSANDSTONES.WORDPRESS.COM



Every planting season
the worries of drought or calamity

fall silent as my hands begin
to work. Warm soil, bees

in the early-blooming apricots,
cisterns brimming at last

with the late snows of winter.
Was I thinking to forgo the garden?

By the moon's transit, it is not a fruit day,
nor a leaf day. Still, I slip the tomato seeds,

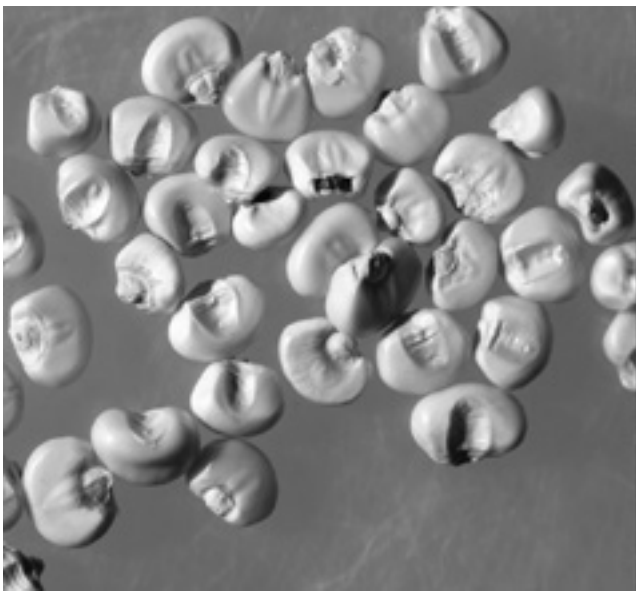
the kale and lettuce, into a wooden flat
on the window sill. Birdsong. Buds.

The long light of spring. I unfurl
the hose and open the tank, watch

the captured rain in its release.
When the snow comes in April,

it flutters over plum blossoms.
Light pierces the heavy skies.

Gentleness, open me. The seeds
are just beginning to rise.



AUGURY

JAMES THOMAS STEVENS

JAMES THOMAS STEVENS (AKWESASNE MOHAWK) ATTENDED THE INSTITUTE OF AMERICAN INDIAN ARTS. HE IS A 2000 WHITING AWARD RECIPIENT AND IS CURRENTLY CHAIR OF CREATIVE WRITING AT THE INSTITUTE OF AMERICAN INDIAN ARTS IN SANTA FE, NEW MEXICO.

POETRYFOUNDATION.ORG/BIO/JAMES-THOMAS-STEVEN

Here, the heart, where I must accept the random blessing.

Consider the garden I had planned so carefully, some
came up too early and others not at all.

The years are unpredictable and strange winds

bring strange seeds. Some rough and blue,

like the chicory that outshines the cultured hybrid.

Some sharp and resentful as prairie nettle.

Then in February, a new seed comes and

you say we feel like rain after years of dry discomfort

And didn't the augur see you,

falling

from the wings of a bird.



BOXCAR FARMS

BOBBE BESOLD

"Potatoes potatoes, there are
potatoes under the ground!"

-Avrum Katz of Boxcar Farm, Llano, NM

BOBBE BESOLD IS AN ARTIST WORKING IN ALL MEDIA (INCLUDING FILM, PERFORMANCE, VISUAL ART, WRITING AND PUBLIC ART), SHE IS A CREATIVE CATALYST AND A COMMUNITY COLLABORATOR, WHOSE WORK FOCUSES ON ECOLOGICAL AND SOCIAL ISSUES.

REJOIN THE RITUAL

BILL MCDORMAN

Where do you buy your seeds? How do you know they are the best ones for your garden, your farm, your family, your community, your planet?

Every time you buy seeds, you start over. You miss the opportunity to take the best of your previous harvest into the next season, and the next, and the next. You miss the opportunity to take advantage of the most powerful forces a seed offers. Seeds represent the only truly self-replicating technology you will ever hold in your hand. Living breathing embryos. Software and hardware rolled into a neat little package ready to collectively incorporate changes in your immediate environment. You ignore the potential. You break the cycle.

For 300 generations, humans have been saving the seeds that worked best. Seeds were saved and replanted again and again in an elegant ritual that created out of wild plants the food crops that now feed the world. Our industrial agriculture, in only two generations, shattered this cycle. Up to 90% of the individual and nuanced varieties adapted to each unique ecology, language, and culture around this beautiful planet have disappeared from widespread use.

When you buy seeds, you can look at colorful pictures. You can read about size, shape, color, maturation, and disease resistance. But, rarely will you find where the seeds were grown, or by whom. Subtle influence and nuance are missing. Little or no story comes wrapped with the seeds to help you continue the cycle.

What I am trying to say is that the best seeds are the ones you can't buy. If you need seeds to start your own reconnection to this powerful ritual, look first to others who have already discovered this magic in your own community. Seed exchanges or seed libraries offer a way to piggyback upon successful local attempts at readapting varieties to your particular climate. If you don't have a local seed exchange or seed library, start one. seedlibraries.org can link you with those who can show you how.

No matter what you do, plant something this year and save your own seeds. Rejoin the ritual. Continue the cycle instead of breaking it.



BILL MCDORMAN IS EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR AND CO-FOUNDER OF THE ROCKY MOUNTAIN SEED ALLIANCE (RMSA). HE WAS PREVIOUS DIRECTOR OF NATIVE SEEDS/SEARCH IN TUCSON. BILL FOUNDED 3 SEED COMPANIES INCLUDING HIGH ALTITUDE GARDENS AND CO-FOUNDED SEVERAL NON-PROFITS INCLUDING THE SAWTOOTH BOTANICAL GARDEN IN HAILEY, IDAHO. HE IS AUTHOR OF BASIC SEED SAVING WHICH HE WROTE IN 1994.

PLACENTA TREE

SARAH MEGAN HUNTER

A CENT A TREE

Plant a tree
a cent a tree
Placenta Tree

He planted trees
throughout her entire pregnancy

She waited and watched as her womb
grew bigger and bigger and her desire
—no—need for him
grew stronger and stronger and

each tree he planted was another 3 cents
another three weeks
away
from their mutual growing experiment

THE ROOTS OF OUR CHILD

The roots of our child
reach deep into the
changing dirt, amidst
cherry pits, worms, ashes,
stones and soot.

eleven winter's gone
the flower-fractal form
that grows, grew him
from breath to born

under water,
into pulsating, tender
fresh spring shoots
just barely
broken through winter's crisp
frozen layer,

to meet the depth of his eyes
for the first time
I wondered, how I had wondered
how I would love him?
entire galaxies in his gray-blue eyes.

SARAH MEGAN HUNTER IS A 4TH YEAR BA STUDENT IN THE CREATIVE WRITING PROGRAM AT UBC OKANAGAN. SHE HAS JUST CO-WRITTEN HER FIRST BOOK OF POETRY, DAYLIGHTING (LAKE PUBLISHING SOCIETY, 2014). IN HER WRITING, SHE IS INTERESTED IN EXPLORING IDENTITY, ISOLATION, ETHICS, AND SENSUALITY.

PLACENTA SEA

They looked in disbelief
the nurse the doctor the other nurse
almost disgusted
when I asked for the remains of you,
of your placenta.

like I had asked for my own aborted child,
something to be dismissed and discarded
not acknowledged or glorified
by a clear plastic bag.

I carried you in my arms
all swaddled, sweet and perfect
and once home threw your afterbirth into the
freezer.
Until I knew what to do with it
or had the strength to carry it out.

It took weeks
to recover
from the separation,
(the intimacy of living with someone within you
is impossible to replace). But then
it comes down to just having space.

So I carried you (you sweet missy
with your kind eyes and curious smiles)
along with your remains
& offered your afterbirth to the ocean
to the shore
to the changing tides
to the place of life
to the wind
to the place where we made you
to the end of innocence
to the end of many things
and the beginning of our life
together.

You,
my only daughter
and I,
the flesh of your home.

STORY BANNERS CAN SPREAD SEEDS SABRA MOORE



Last fall, Sabra Moore, artist and long time manager of the Española Farmers Market, organized THE (Second) FARM SHOW at the Bond House Museum in Española. She invited ten artists (Bobbe Besold, Carmen Campos, Debra Fritts, Sabra Moore, Norma Navarro, Beata Tsoisie-Peña, Luis Pena, Iren Schio, Frank Shelton, Gabriela Silva) to collaborate with local farmers by collecting stories and photos about their farms. Moore then created cloth scroll banners, each 1-foot x 8-foot, by ironing laser transfer prints of their stories and images. Bobbe Besold also created banners. Then all ten artists made artworks in response to the stories. There were 31 Farm Story Banners at THE FARM SHOW, including 13 from a similar project in 2003. Artists and farmers had an opportunity to share their creative endeavors; artists visited the farms and farmers came to the museum. Here are some of the stories with fragments from the banners and the installation of the project



SABRA MOORE IS AN ARTIST LIVING IN ABIQUIU, NEW MEXICO WHOSE ART PRACTICE OFTEN INCORPORATES COLLABORATION WITH OTHER ARTISTS OR COMMUNITY MEMBERS. SHE IS THE LONG TIME MANAGER OF THE ESPAÑOLA FARMERS MARKET AND FEELS ARTISTS AND FARMERS SHARE CREATIVE ENDEAVORS.

PHOTO CREDIT: SABRA MOORE/ COURTESY OF ESPANOLA FARMERS MARKET

EURALIA VIGIL

Euralia Vigil lives in Chimayó next to the orchards and fields where she was raised. "Although I was a teacher for thirty-three years, everyone thinks of me as a farmer. I always kept working in the orchards and the gardens." Her father, Severo Martinez, used to own most of the land between what is now the Lighthouse and the Chimayó Elementary School, but he acquired it piece by piece. Now the land is divided between the various children and grandchildren; some of their fields have been donated for the elementary school where Euralia later taught, and for the church. "We grew everything, chile, corn, watermelons, wheat, alfalfa, and we raised all our meat. We had sheep, pigs and cows." Her father planted over a thousand fruit trees--apples, grapes, peaches, and apricots. Some of the original apple trees still stand near Euralia's house.

She remembers how all the children would help in the fall to string chile ristras so the peppers could dry properly. "My parents would hide watermelons inside the mounds of chile and when we came to a watermelon, we would take a break." Her father had a gristmill for grinding the wheat and he ran a small general store in the house. Her mother Julianita was from the Ortega family of weavers, so she wove beautiful blankets. "We even made our mattresses and stuffed them with wool from the sheep." She grew up with five brothers and sisters, but she and her siblings weren't the first family her parents had raised. They had lost all six of their children during the devastating flu pandemic and had the courage to start their family again. "They had to travel by wagon to the hospital in Española, and by the time they got back home another child would have fallen sick." Euralia went to Menaul High School in Albuquerque and her father paid her room and board in apples and chile. All the children went to college thanks to the farm and the four sisters became teachers.

Euralia's first teaching job was in a one-room schoolhouse in Ojo Sarco. That's where she met her husband, Frank Victor Vigil, a man who also loved working the land. They raised their two daughters on Euralia's family place in Chimayó; the girls learned how to plant, how to water, how to hoe, how to pick peaches or apples. "Living out of the land is very important, it's the best education one can get."

The farmers used to sell their produce by going door to door with their trucks or from roadside farm stands. Euralia and Frank were among the farmers who started the Santa Fe Farmers Market, helping to create a better outlet for their fruits and vegetables. When the federal Farmers' Market Nutrition Program started, known now as WIC, a photo of Euralia was selected for a poster advertising this program; she is shown accepting the first WIC check from a customer who by chance was also her cousin.

Euralia retired from teaching in 1982 and continued farming with her extended family. Her daughter, Julie, now lives next door in a house that is flanked by some of the original trees her grandfather planted. For many years, Euralia came weekly to the Española Farmers Market; her grandsons often came with her to help sell the many varieties of apples and her jars of choke-cherry jam. One of those grandsons now teaches in Albuquerque where Euralia once boarded to go to high school, "but we tell him, you live in Albuquerque, but your home is here in Chimayó".

BRENDA, MARIE, BETHANY CORIZ

The Coriz family has been coming to the Española Farmers Market for over fifteen years, bringing their freshly baked horno bread, cinnamon cookies and flat fruit pies from their home in Kewa Pueblo, formerly called Santo Domingo. "I love coming to Española, the people are all so friendly," Brenda says. The three women represent three generations of bakers. Brenda learned to bake from her mother Marie, who learned from her mother Catalina, and now Brenda's daughter Bethany is also a baker and a new mother herself. Brenda started making bread when she was about ten years old. She and Marie cook in the two big hornos that stand right across the street from Marie's house in the pueblo. "An older man made our first horno; now Jerome makes the hornos." Her current horno is about six years old. "I keep it traditional with mud plaster." Each spring, she and her family add a new coat of mud. The children always love applying the mud plaster. She can cook 150 pounds in that horno, baking 98 loaves.

Brenda makes the traditional round loaf, but she has also noticed that people want smaller loaves, so she has started making dinner rolls and on occasion, a small rectangular loaf. A few years ago, she started using cooking oil rather than lard, to produce a healthier bread. "We measure all the ingredients by hand; we don't use measuring cups." They use the same visual method for cookies and pies. Lately, Brenda has started to make decorative shapes for her Indian cookies, creating swirls, triangles, flowers and other inventive shapes, then dusting the cookies with cinnamon before baking. All the cookies and breads are placed in plastic bags for cleanliness, but the bagged delicacies arrive at the market wrapped in blankets, still warm from the oven despite the long drive from Kewa.

It's tricky heating the horno to the right temperature before baking. The Coriz women always use cedar. Some people use a wadded paper bag to taste the heat, watching how it curls and singes. Brenda has a different method. When the charcoal dies down, she scatters the ashes inside the horno, then adds a few more sticks in the shape of a small tepee. She lets those burn down, then takes out all the ash and tests with a sprinkling of oats. She has learned how to judge the way the oats brown before entrusting the plump loaves to the oven.

The women bake all year round; they go to farmers' markets and feast days in the pueblos. For weddings, they may be asked to bake 600 pounds of breads and cookies. The family also has a license to sell hamburgers. For the Labor Day craft fair in Kewa, they have a booth selling hamburgers. One year, Brenda bought matching pink Española Farmers Market aprons for her crew to wear in the booth.

Marie has eight children; three of the daughters, Brenda, Tanya and Holly, have come to the Market at various times. Holly also makes and sells jewelry in Gallup and at feast days in various pueblos; Brenda and Bethany sometimes go there with their breads. Brenda has four children, Bethany, Brandon, Bradley and little Bridget; all have come to the Market to help sell the breads. Now Bethany has a new baby daughter named Aspen Claire. Occasionally Brenda's husband James comes, or her brother Fabian. Some years they bring oval shaped smooth green melons, whose flesh is delicate like a honey dew. "We call them Indian melons. We'll bring them if they make this summer."

LAWRENCE LOY CAMPBELL

His given name is Lawrence Loy Campbell, but at the Española Farmers Market, most people call him Roy or Loy and some people call him Larry. He's a man of many parts. Loy grew up knowing how to tend fruit orchards, care for chickens and goats, or weed and hoe the fields. His father, Henry Arthur Campbell, came from Whiteface, Texas and his mother, Candy Sanchez, grew up near Los Luceros, the youngest of six children. Henry Arthur knew how to work with heavy machinery; he could operate a bulldozer or a backhoe and also did long haul trucking. In the nineteen fifties, he would sometimes drive truckloads of apples from the Española Valley to Amarillo, Texas. "They loaded the apples loose and shipped them to Texas."

His mother's family had land along the Rio Grande at Los Luceros. Loy described the types of fruit and berries growing on their sixty-acre orchard. "There were two acres in strawberries, eight different kinds of peaches, cherry trees, nectarines, grapevines, two rows of pears, apricots." He named the varieties of apples, mentally taking count, "Golden Delicious, Red, Double Red, Winesap, Jonathan, Holland, King David..." His father died when Loy was six, but Candy managed to keep the orchards and fields. She hired help and the four children worked as well, rising early before school to water and weed. She kept a fruit stand along the highway to sell her produce. In the winter she canned, giving any extra produce to the nuns. She liked to make things out of plaster molds during the fallow months. Loy remembers a big deer mold with antlers. Then the fruit froze for a few years in a row, and another misfortune befell the family- they were injured in a car accident. Loy broke both his knees. In 1968, his mother sold 35 acres and some of the heavy equipment including the bulldozer. Loy was thirteen, but he already knew how to operate the bulldozer. She kept the family house and an acre of irrigated land, saving sections of land for all four children. They moved to California. After a few years, they returned to New Mexico. Loy settled in Albuquerque, and worked at various jobs, milking cows at a big dairy farm and mixing dough at Jill's Bakery.

Loy moved back to Alcalde in 1982. His farm started with the section that his mother had saved for him, but over the years, he bought more irrigated parcels. For thirty years, he worked as a trucker while also cultivating his fields. He drove trucks loaded with heavy adobes for the Adobe Factory among other jobs. Then he started having black outs while driving, surviving three terrible accidents. He spent a year in bed, disabled from the accidents, and then one day, he thought to himself, "I have this land, I know how to farm, I'm tired of laying around." He went back to farming. Now he cultivates an acre and a half growing all kinds of vegetables and melons- calabacitas, corn, peas, heirloom chile, tomatoes, squash, bell peppers, jalapeño peppers, yellow hots, cabbage, heirloom pumpkins, melons, yellow watermelons, etc. He brings these vegetables to the Market. "I enjoy the Market; I like to talk to people." When it's time to make chicos, Loy works with another grower, Jose Velasquez, to roast the chicos in a special manner. They dig a deep hole in the ground to create a natural clay oven inside the earth, and then seal the ears of corn overnight to bake on top of the hot coals. This year, when his irrigation ditch got silted up after a big rain, Loy got in his truck and started hauling water. He figured that it took him nineteen loads to bring 300 gallons of water to his fields, but he didn't want to lose his plants after all the hard work.

NICOLAS ROMERO

Nicolas and Bernice Romero live in Vadito, a farm community in a high mountain valley just beyond Peñasco. "Turn left at the bridge onto Montoya Road. If you get lost, ask anyone for Nicolas Romero." He and Bernice built their house on one and a half acres of land formerly owned by his aunt. Other kin live down the road. We stood on their porch looking across the green valley with high ridges encircling the fields. Bernice pointed out the various houses of Nicolas' relatives nearby.

Nicolas is the oldest of ten children, six brothers and 4 sisters. His mother Elvira Mancha, grew up in Eagle Pass, Texas where she met her husband, Victoriano Romero, a soldier in the US Air Force. She moved with him back to his home in Vadito. Victoriano died unexpectedly when Nicolas was a teenager, so much of the care and help for his younger siblings and widowed mother fell onto his shoulders. He picked potatoes in Colorado in the nineteen fifties and sixties, served as a soldier in Vietnam, and later worked for over twenty years as a firefighter for the Forest Service, fighting wild-fires all over the west. He fought fires in Montana, California, Utah, New Mexico, Idaho and Texas.

Like Nicolas, Bernice comes from a large family of five children. She grew up in El Prado north of Taos. She and Nicolas worked together to build their house in Vadito, a three-bedroom cinder block home that sits slightly above the fields where Nicolas farms. Bernice worked for 21 years at a health facility in Dixon and later at a senior center. They have three children and two granddaughters. She knows how to "dry and jar" all the foods they raise for the winter. Nicolas often grows sugar beets, heirloom pumpkins and other root crops that like the high altitude and cool nights. This year, his corn is already high; he has also planted some fat green and spotted pumpkins. We go to visit his new greenhouse. "Some lady gave me tomatoes and I smashed them and let the seeds dry." He shows me some green tomatoes already ripening. Wind has been a problem for the plastic covering of the greenhouse and Nicolas has devised a method for protecting the plastic with some wire fencing leaning against the sides.

Their house is nestled against a high hill. Occasionally bears come down from the mountains. A bear ate one of his chickens last winter. We walk over to visit the big ochre colored hens and a rooster who eyes us cautiously. They used to have goats and pigs, but now, they just keep the hens. Nicolas often goes higher into the mountains to gather osha; he knows the right places to find this healing herb.

Tall hollyhocks flank the front porch; one of their cats comes over. They lost the mother cat recently, most likely to coyotes. Bernice grows the flowers. She plucks one of the red hollyhock blossoms, turns it upside down, and shows me how they used to make ladies out of the flowers, deftly shredding the stem slightly to form a green hat around the seed bulb.

SPUD: A DIALOGICAL AESTHETIC ENQUIRY INTO FARMING KNOWLEDGE, FOOD SECURITY, SEED HERITAGE AND SUSTAINABILITY **DEIRDRE O'MAHONY**

SPUD combines artistic research and the production of artworks, events, exhibitions, films, collaborations and interventions, to reflect upon farming knowledge, food security, seed heritage and sustainability.

SPUD is a transdisciplinary project between different publics—rural, urban, farmers, artists, academics, cultural agencies and institutions.

SPUD provides a particular, easily understood and accessible entry point for activating a conversation about a wide range of issues.

SPUD reflects upon the particular position of the potato within Irish culture, the Great Famine, and conscious and unconscious attitudes to land, identity and co-memoration.

Deirdre O'Mahony initiated SPUD, slang for potato, as a practice-based art research project in 2011. It came out of a public art project initiated in 2007 in a derelict rural post office in Killinaboy, in the Burren region in the West of Ireland. Repurposed as a public art project, and re-named "X-PO", the space became a site in which to engage the different communities of the locality in a collective, reflective process on the future of a region that was highly contested. (O'Mahony, 2012, 2014) The creation of archives related to the personal and collective history of the locality was fundamental to this process, making visible underlying, often unacknowledged, perspectives around history, representation and participation. (Byrne & O'Mahony 2011, 2013) At X-PO, conversations often revolve around ways of growing food and the extent and depth of knowledge about potatoes shared by some participants led to the idea of a potato project - SPUD.

O'Mahony and Chicago-based artist Frances Whitehead both share an interest in the role that artists' knowledge can play in devising pragmatic, innovative solutions towards shifting mindsets and attitudes towards climate change and sustainable food production. (Whitehead 2013) has worked for a number of years with the International Potato Centre, CIP, a

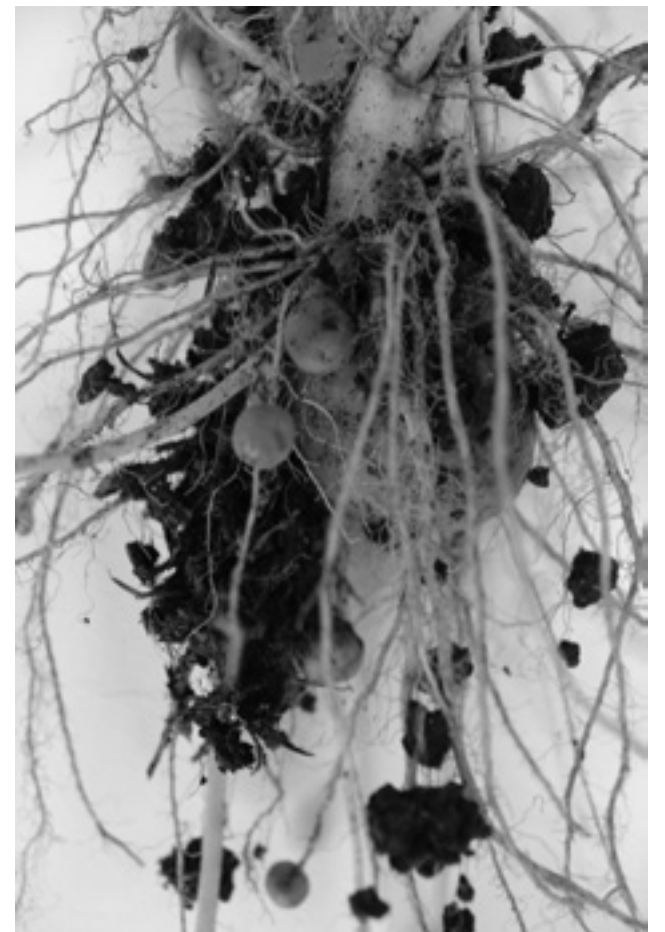
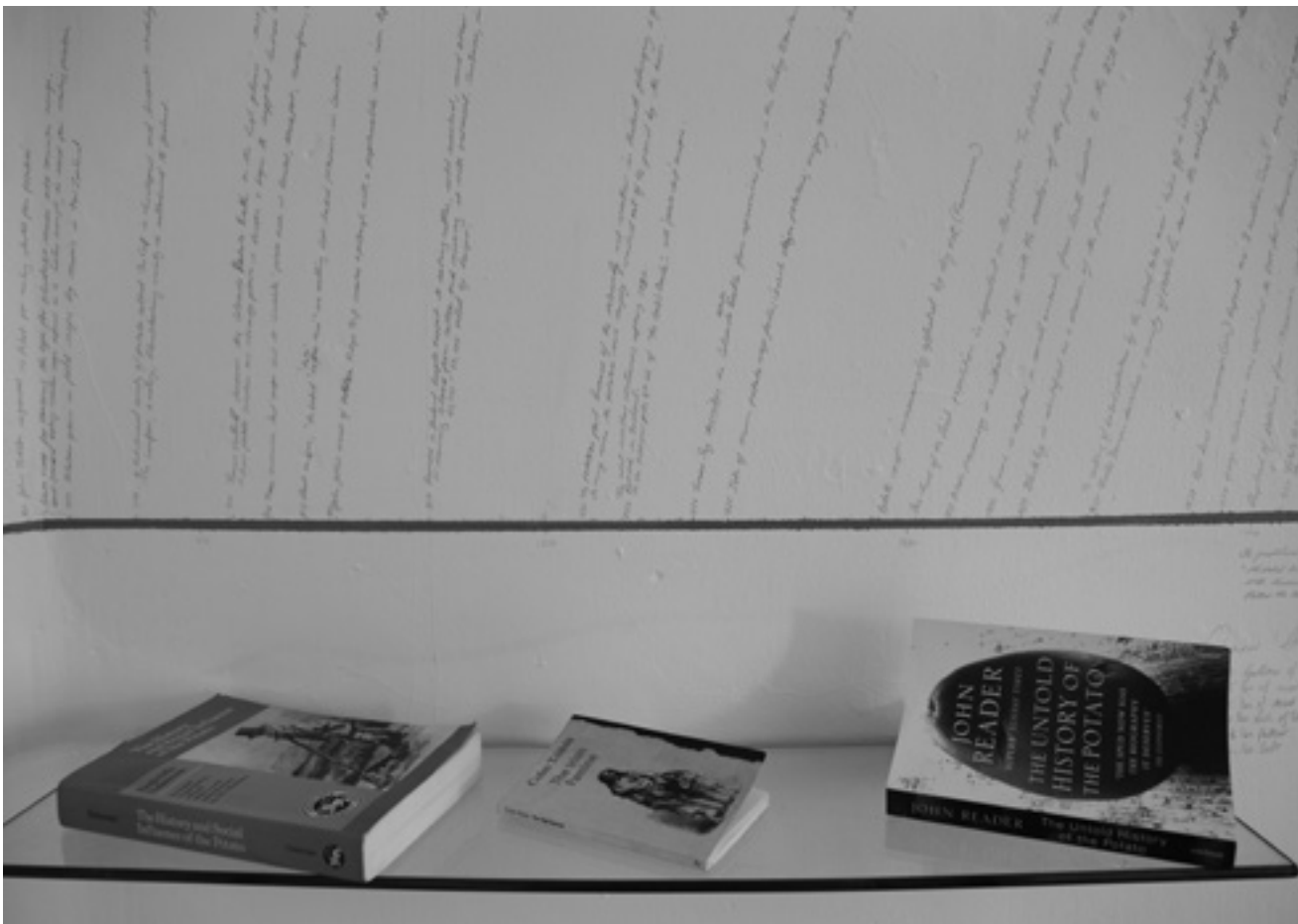
research-for-development organization based in Lima, Peru. Both artists pooled research, sharing ideas on potato cultivation and its contemporary relevance to food security, particularly in cities. The history and social influence of the potato has been a source of a considerable amount of research within environmental and development studies, largely driven by CIP. SPUD now adds an aesthetic dimension to this discourse, connecting rural knowledge to urban sites through culturally driven knowledge transfer and reflecting upon the continued importance of tacit, cultivation knowledge to the most pressing problems of contemporary life. In *Notes of a Potato Watcher*, James Lang argues that potato projects teach a simple, but crucial, lesson: how to address basic problems with practical solutions.

Village culture recognizes that solutions must be tailored to fit the circumstances. Whether the problem is seed production, controlling crop pests, genetic improvements, or storage, the key is to take the diversity imposed by place, by farming traditions, and by ecology as a starting point. (Lang, 2001, 5)

It is impossible to think about the potato without thinking about the Great Irish Famine. Visual expressions of that history have tended (with



¹ CIP'S MISSION IS TO INCREASE POTATO PRODUCTION AND CONSUMPTION IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES WHILE PROTECTING BIODIVERSITY THROUGH THE INTRODUCTION OF IMPROVED POTATO VARIETIES.



exceptions) to point back to that narrative as one of abject victimhood. SPUD is an attempt to present a more nuanced reading, pointing to future implications of the loss of tacit, 'ground up' agricultural knowledge, the importance of seed diversity and the continued global relevance of the potato. SPUD proposes a different model of co-memoration to the traditional memorial. By looking back to the Great Irish Famine, and forward to future food security, SPUD seeks to perform as a catalyst for an imaginative rethinking of the way that we engage with one another as global citizens.

The main weakness of the potato remains its susceptibility to disease, particularly blight. This is driving research into disease resistant varieties and is one of the reasons that the SPUD project is focused on seed collections and the great seed-saving expeditions of the 20th century. Research is underway to develop genetically-modified varieties that can withstand disease, avoid spraying, and provide varieties that can adapt to changing climatic conditions, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa and China. EU research trials and trials by CIP, are underway in Ireland and South America and in the USA GM varieties are in use for many years with some seed-stocks developed by Monsanto. Trials in Ireland generated a

huge public response and an important thread of this SPUD research is to provide a context in which to unpack some of the underlying anxieties, and paradoxes implied by both the pro- and anti- GM lobbies.

The cultivation of the potato has changed global history. From its initial domestication in the Andes over 8,000 years ago, its diasporic spread from the southern throughout the northern hemisphere and in the eighteenth and nineteenth century, tipped the global balance of power to Europe and the USA. (McNeill, 1999) Perhaps now as humans are tipping the ecological balance and having more of an effect on nature than was previously ever thought possible, it is time to re-examine our relationship with food production? The humble potato might yet hold the key to providing secure food supplies for precarious, ever-expanding urban populations, after all the potato is destined to feed humans on expeditions to Mars and if so, why not right here, right now?

For details of past, present and future SPUD Projects see deirdre-omahony.ie/public-art-projects/spud.html



² FOR AN EXCELLENT OVERVIEW OF THE ECOLOGICAL AND ETHICAL ISSUES AT PLAY SEE THE AGRICULTURAL LAW BLOG WHICH REGULARLY EXAMINES SOME OF THE COMPLEXITIES ARISING IN FOOD PRODUCTION TODAY, INCLUDING THE BROADER LEGAL AND ETHICAL ISSUES. AGLAW.BLOGSPOT.IE

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DEIRDRE O'MAHONY IS AN ARTIST, WRITER AND LECTURER AT THE CENTRE FOR CREATIVE ARTS, GMT. HER PRACTICE IS SITUATED IN THE BURREN IN THE WEST OF IRELAND AND SHE HAS A PHD FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF BRIGHTON.

DANCING SEEDS INTO LIFE

RULAN TANGEN

After a dance performance some time ago, a young man placed a gift in my hand. He said he was moved to give this to me. He didn't know why, but he believed I would someday know why. I opened my hand and saw three large beautiful seeds, so shiny they seemed painted in rich hues of black and light purple. I marveled at these beauties, they seemed mysterious container of hidden stories. They made their way to various fates: in the desert soil, on my altar, and the last a journey into the dark hidden recesses of my travel bags, in continual motion with no final destination.

As the founding Artistic Director /Choreographer of DANCING EARTH, I sense that this vision for Indigenous contemporary dance came into existence from seeds planted far before my birth. It was in the fall harvest season of 2004 that this dream became embodied by vital young dancers in patterns and movements that revitalize ancient cultural philosophies, with breath that became the name of the ground we dance on in reflection of its life force and constant motion. My dreams and the dreams of their ancestors were embodied by these intertribal artists, in images of clouds, of naming rituals in desert caves, of balancing forces of fire and water, whirlwinds, storms, wild plants, aspen groves, of clay and mud and hip-hop and warriors and violins.

In 2010, our first full length eco-cultural work was made: "Of Bodies Of Elements." Prophetically, I said that each dance within this production had so many layers that each could be expanded into a full-length work. Embedded into Act 1, after dances of constellations and water, came a suite of dances about planters, the three sisters, sunflowers, and CAGED—a challenging piece that used GMOs as a metaphor for colonization, female oppression and loss of freedoms.

Mykel Diaz cooked a delicious stew of corns, beans, and squash at the beginning of the rehearsal process, and shared stories about desert waffle gardening and the botanical growth patterns of the intertwined plants that became the dance movements of the ensuing trio.

The sunflower dance was inspired by accounts of an ancient sunflower dance for women, as shared by Anemone, Nishke and Winona Mars of the Narragansett First Nation of Rhode Island. Further research into the properties of this flower, revealed astounding purposefulness as food, dye,

woven into clothing and shelter, and a symbol for anti-nuclear movement because of its shamanistic ability to remove nuclear waste from water or soil.

After bringing this series of dances to communities in 8 states and 27 locations across the continent, Dancing Earth took on its next cycle of creation to honor the sacredness of the water on our planet and in our bodies. This deeply emotional and decolonizing process and production took our work across the world to Aotearoa, with performance rituals in Canada, New York, California and New Mexico, as well as 'waters of wellness' workshops with communities in each location. And, at many of these, we were led to gardens, cultivated with wisdom and sense of legacy by Native culture carriers including Ras K'Dee, Kim Marcus, and William Kingfisher.

Gerardo Marin, director of Bay Area's Rooted in Community, in the sunlit Berkeley garden of poet-activist and beloved elder Rafael J Gonzalez, shared with me that the Basque Farmers who had won the Food Sovereignty prize, had called to artists to create work about food justice, because it is art that changes people's hearts. I accepted this call to action, along with statistics shared by my allies at Native Wellness Institute about health challenges to the youth of Native America and the country in general. And began with origins: Origi-Nation: Roots and Seeds.

"Quisieron enterrarnos pero no sabian que eramos semillas" (They wanted to bury us, they didn't know we were SEEDS)—Mexican proverb, used much by Zapatistas of Chiapas.

Since before I even became a dancer, I loved making movements outside in nature. This was a deep part of my personal practice and choreographic resourcing, and in the prophetic year of 2012 I began to share it with my company members and students of Dancing Earth, as 'land dance.' With 2014's Orgi-Nation, this brought me into activation of four seasons of creative exploration.

WINTER: I began with 'The Inner Life of Seeds Beneath Snow,' in which I explored grounded movements lying deep in the blanket of snow in the field behind my home. This became a remarkably slow and subtle solo for Santa Fe's exquisite solo performer Julie Brette Adams. She created a form fitting seed-like sac of costume, hand painted with vines, stage strewn with petals, embodying the theme I had uncovered in the snowy hills of Cerro Gordo.

Soon after, I created a solo with some of the same movements, for UC Riverside's Indigenous Choreographer's Symposium wearing a mechanics uniform reminiscent of my grandpa's, a great warrior and gardener. The uniform of 'worker' was in part a social commentary for it rendered me invisible until people realized that I was the featured performer; it also became a layer that must be peeled away for the seed to grow. Accompanying the dance were handmade papers embedded with seeds, created with collaborative efforts of Arizona schoolchildren under the guidance of art teacher Mary Yazzie, as well as Safos Dance Theater's community engaged arts workshop. These papers were offered to audience members, to write down their seed dreams, and place anywhere on the stage. In my janitor uniform, I eventually swept them up—an act that was reminiscent of indigenous dreams being swept away by forces of colonization, with me reversing the power role, but in fact was intended as composting, for those seed papers were gently placed in the earth of gardens, with songs and gentle movements to encourage the growth into flowers, to attract pollinating bees and butterflies, which would then assist food to grow, and crops to harvest and meals to be made, and on and on.



FROM LEFT: IMAGES OF THREE SISTERS DANCE BY ANTHONY C COLLINS, AND OF SUNFLOWERS DANCE AND STICK PLANTING DANCE BY PAULO T PHOTOGRAPHY

SPRING: I began several Origi-Nation solos for artists of Dancing Earth. Like seeds, they felt like little art pieces that could expand and blossom into larger works, but in themselves were beautiful, symbolic, concise.

With Quetzal Guerrero, I collaborated on a solo that explored his cultural and musician heritage with body percussion, Amazonian nose flute, and dynamic athletic movements that drew on his strengths as a capoeirista, and expressed the fertility and inner rhythm of a seed. Deollo Johnson, also with a capoeira background, started a dynamic solo with samba rhythm about bees and pollination. Anne Pesata, of the Jicarilla Apache, explored her own roots as a fifth generation basketweaver, and from an autobiographical monologue which was layered onto a cello score we created an expressive solo that has subsequently been performed for, and admired by no less than Gloria Steinem, Alice Walker, and Winona LaDuke!

SUMMER: we expanded the inter-tribal perspectives that embodied the bio-diversity of seeds, by inviting 21 Cultural Artist Ambassadors from Canada, Mexico, Guatemala, Hong Kong, Fiji, Guatemala, New Zealand/Australia and Sweden/India to creatively explore the concept of seeds and roots. After gracious cultural welcoming by Roxanne Swentzell at the Poeh Center, we danced in arroyos, parks, markets, streets, caves - sometimes welcomed and sometimes chased out, and the improvisations had endless interpretations of the core theme. After 2 weeks, like wild vines we took over downtown Santa Fe's Skylight's alleyways, balcony, dance floor and aisles in an unforgettable, multi-dimensional, inter-disciplinary, trans-cultural night of performance ritual. With live song, seed exchange improvised DJ score, aerial fabric, and interactive art installations made from salvaged materials, this Indigenous-led evening was in contrast to the celebrated market of Indian art that was in the surrounding downtown area. At the core of our offering was that which could not be bought, owned, or possessed, only lived, experienced and remembered. Like a delicious meal, a kiss, a flower, a sunset, it is held longer in the heart because it is fleeting.

FALL: I was invited to Ute/Dine territory of Durango Colorado, for a 6 week residency. During this time, I found myself creating a production with over 50 inter-departmental students and inter-generational community members, involved with dance, song, stage crew, making of props, costumes and sets. Welcomed by Ute elder Kenny Frost, we were also blessed by Native chef Karlos Baca who shared foraging techniques, and Grand Canyon Trust's Tony Skrelunas who shared Hopi and Navajo farming techniques which informed those dances. Central to the experience were nightly potlucks after every rehearsal. I planned them as an organic way to generate story sharing, recipes to share with students who were away from home for the first time, and nourishment that matched the theme of the work. There was resistance, students feeling like they were too poor to provide food for others. I asked them to take the risk, the portal to Indigenous consciousness, to take care of each other, and thus be taken care of. The results were beyond imagining, students taking to heart the very convincing Junk Food dance, and opting to not follow the fate of that dance's ending and resolving to try to prioritize natural foods. Some students said it was their only nourishing meal of the day; another lost the 24 lbs she had gained during pregnancy, setting a healthy new example for her little girl. Onstage, the collaboration was a magical procession of dances starting in winter, and culminating in fall harvest dance. I will always remember this SEED as a manifestation of how dance can serve as a functional ritual, for connecting people to culture, to land, and to each other.

The seeds of Dancing Earth's cycle of eco-cultural work continues to grow. This year, we will explore the theme of Re-Generation; that which truly lasts is that which is temporal, and must be renewed over and over to continue to live.

RULAN TANGEN CREATES DANCE AS FUNCTIONAL RITUAL, PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH AND HARMONY.

DANCINGEARTH.ORG

SEEDS, TREES AND STORIES.

DANIELLE JOHNSON

As we move through life, the webs of relations we weave become ever more complex. Talk of relations usually evokes images of human connectedness across the globe, yet relations extend beyond this to the plant and animal communities we share this earth with. In the Amazon, some indigenous groups call yams their sisters, and in Southern India, the Nayaka people receive regular, life-sustaining gifts from big father and big mother - the forest and the hills (Bird-David 1990, 1992). In this short essay, I would like to share with you some stories of the relations between plants and humans that I encountered while interning with the Irish Seed Savers Association in County Clare, Ireland, in 2008. While these narratives are unique to Ireland, they reflect upon a recurring motif in the human existence: the importance of plants as providers and holders of, and witnesses to, our cultures, our rituals and our families.



The purpose of my stay with Seed Savers was to investigate the cultural significance of the heritage fruits, vegetables and grains they steward, which I would then write my undergraduate dissertation project about. In addition to the brassicas and the nightshades, the wheats and the barleys, Seed Savers care for (and make publicly available) the largest collection of indigenous Irish apple varieties in the world. Soon after arriving, I was pointed towards a large black satchel which held hundreds of letters describing apples which had been sent to the organization during the 1990s as examples of rare varieties which they might be interested in adding to their research orchards. It was from these letters, and the ensuing correspondence which I established with their authors, that I learned about the importance of the apple tree in Irish society.

The apple, which is thought to have originated in the Tien Shan Mountains of Central Asia, has a long history in Ireland: at a Bronze Age fort near Navan Fort, County Armagh, an apple was unearthed and carbon dated at over 3000 years old (Lamb and Hayes 2007: 11). Apples continued to have an influence in 'the Emerald Isle' throughout the Middle Ages and beyond, when places were commonly named with derivations of 'abhalghort,' meaning 'apple garden,' for example, Ballywholart, County Down (Ibid: 4). After the Second World War, apple

growing became more commercialized, and many varieties ceased to be cultivated when the small-scale growers who had previously devoted time to them found it unprofitable to do so (Ibid: 6). Despite this, Irish apples have continued to represent "the very individuality of a place and its people" (Ibid: 22).

The apple trees discussed in the letters from the satchel held many poignant memories for the authors: of long-lost family, friends or communities whose land the trees inhabited; the rosy glow of childhood days; the passing of a different time. Ciaran Fagan from County Longford originally wrote to Seed Savers in 2004, to share samples of four apple trees which his maternal Great Grandfather Martin McCabe planted before 1900. In the letter, Ciaran described how the trees became a favorite place for him and his siblings to play 'house':

"Springtime in the garden was magical when the scores of snowdrops dotted around the trees appeared, covering the ground like a white carpet. Each year we would follow the trees' cycle from buds to beautiful white blossoms that turned pink and disappeared almost overnight. In the harvest, climbing the trees to the top was a must to reach the biggest and most sun-kissed apples. Next to the apple garden my Grandfather Stephen Reilly kept the most beautiful vegetable and soft fruit garden. So well presented was his lot that I recall him winning the Senior Gardener of the County on at least two occasions. One could never imagine the amount of produce that could be obtained from such a small area. Boxes of surplus strawberries were sold annually at the local market. However, the pleasure of sharing the produce of his passion greatly outweighed the monetary worth. This passion for gardening carried him to his 98th year when in 1998, he passed away peacefully, having been active in the garden up until two years before his death."

For Ciaran, these trees bore witness to four generations of his family, and serve as a symbol for these people and their activities in a defined place — they are "mnemonic sites" which inform a sense of who he is and where he came from. He has now taken cuttings of the trees, which have been grafted onto new rootstocks with the help of Seed Savers. A rootstock is like a 'base' onto which fruit tree cuttings are transferred. The two wood types then knit together to form an exact copy of the cutting's variety.

The intention behind Ciaran's grafting endeavors is to grow carbon copies of the old trees, so that they will "one day make as happy a playground for my children as I remember."

I also corresponded with Ciaran about another ancient tree, the Dunning Apple, which grows near to his home, and harbors not only memories from Stephen's own childhood, but the stories of an abandoned village and the lives of three generations of the Longworth/Dunning family, whose land it stands on:

"The tree is growing on the town land of Loughandonning and about one mile from the centre of Athlone. I know this area very well as I live in the adjoining town land of Cartontroy and grew up here. This area was a magical place growing up as a child in the 1950s and early 1960s. Having a deep interest in trees and flowers there was lots to see during the summer months. My very old Grandmother used to bring me and my brother up the old bog trackway for walks very frequently and it was magic. It was a walkway that she had used for over seventy years as a shortcut to the nearby bog. There was lots to see: wild flowers, furze, wild strawberries, wild raspberries, a huge Crab Apple tree, wild plums, wild gooseberries and the big apple tree in the Dunning's field.

This apple tree I believe was just part of a local ecosystem which evolved around a scattered pre-famine settlement of several houses which existed in the immediate area then. There was some fragmentary evidence of this settlement to be seen when I was young, such as part of a gable wall of one house, the outline of the foundations of another and so on. These remains of old houses had me often wondering who lived in them and when. In the last few years I came across some information on this long abandoned settlement. According to the Griffith Valuation Papers and maps, there is documentary evidence that a number of houses were located in the area where Dunning's apple tree was growing. It is likely that there had been for some time before the Griffith Survey was conducted here in the early 1850s. It is unclear as to how this tree came to grow here. I do not believe that it was planted. If one observes where it is growing, it is clear anyone with knowledge of fruit trees would not plant it here. The only reasonable conclusion is that it grew from a pip. Someone probably threw the butt of an apple into a shallow pit and nature did the rest. The date of its germination: some-time around 1860."

Since Babby Longworth married Thomas Dunning, the tree now grows on Dunning land, yet it has witnessed three generations of the Longworth family:

"I have talked to Babby Dunning on many occasions about this tree and she tells me that it was a big spreading tree when she was little, and that would be in the late 1920s — early 1930s. She recalls as a child bringing a branch laden with blossom to her Father Henry Longworth. He was cross with her as he said that by taking the blossom she was reducing the apples on the tree. She calls the tree a Crab Tree but I am not sure this is true. Certainly she said it produced small apples that were very sour but when she was young times were poor and you ate anything that was available. I asked her did her Father see this tree as a young tree. It was a substantial tree even in his younger days. It most likely went back to the time of her Grandfather Joseph Longworth who is mentioned in the Griffith papers of 1854. In December 2005 I paid the tree a visit with Babby's approval and got a number of scions which I put in a pot of peat until March 2006. I grafted one scion off the tree onto an M-26 rootstock which Irish Seed Savers gave me. The graft was a complete success and the grafted specimen has grown very well. It flowered this year and set a small crop of six apples which is good going. At least if the old Mother tree died tomorrow I have a carbon copy of it which links the present with the past and the people of the old settlement."

All around the world, rich, evocative, place-based stories such as these exist. Plants have been irrevocably part of the cycles of our lives as humans for millennia. Aside from the incredibly important role biodiversity plays in maintaining the health of the planet and the ecosystems it supports, caring for rare, heirloom crops allows us to continue to nurture relations with our gentle green plant friends, which give us a sense of who we are, where we come from, and where we're going.

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TO HEAR DANIELLE'S SEEDS STORY GO TO:
[SOUNDCLOUD.COM/SEEDBROADCAST/DANIELLE-JOHNSON-TALKS-ABOUT](https://soundcloud.com/seedbroadcast/danielle-johnson-talks-about)

