

September 15, 2004

NATIONALLY KNOWN ARTIST AND FILMMAKER TO SPEAK AT BOISE STATE FIRST NATIONS CONFERENCE

Boise State University's fourth First Nations Conference, titled "Indigenous Visions: Honoring Traditions, Creating Futures," will be held Friday, Sept. 24. The free daylong conference begins at 9 a.m. in the Student Union Jordan Ballroom. Free parking is available in the Student Union visitor lot — participants should indicate they are guests of the First Nations Conference.

The conference will focus on issues crucial to indigenous communities in Idaho and the Northwest, as well as concerns pertinent to all Native peoples and community members.

A roundtable discussion and film will be presented from 1:30 to 4:00 p.m. on the subject of the "S" word. Ruby Bernal, a local Native activist, will speak about her work of several years to eliminate the word "squaw" (the "S" word) from geographical sites in Idaho, of which there are approximately 200. A film on the subject, entitled "The 'S' Word", produced by Sonya Rosario, will be shown. Discussion will follow, including discussants, Deaun Lone Bear and Cedric DeCory, two First Nations leaders in our local community.

Keynote speakers are:

- Sandra Sunrising Osawa, a member of the Makah Indian Nation in Washington, will speak at 9 a.m. followed by a screening from one of her films. Osawa is an independent film producer. The first Native American independent to produce for commercial television, she produced a series on Native Americans that aired in 1975 on NBC. The 10-part series earned her an Outstanding Producer Award. She now owns her own production company in Seattle, Upstream Productions. Osawa's credits include: "Lighting the 7th Fire," "On & Off the Res with Charlie Hill," "Usual and Accustomed Places" and "Pepper's Pow Wow."
- Jaune Quick-To-See Smith, a contemporary artist born in Montana on the Flathead Reservation of the confederated Salish and Kootenai tribes, will speak at 6:30 p.m. She explores subject matter that in one way or another relates to heritage and the issues that make up the historical and contemporary lives of American Indians. Her presentation is in conjunction with an exhibit of her recent works on paper that runs through Nov. 3.

Other artistic exhibitions include:

- "Dog Head Stew," consisting of the works of 24 artists celebrating Native American traditions and cultural persistence. The portfolio invites personal and political expres-

sion honoring or criticizing past and present representations of Native American culture. The title is based on a story where Indians throwing a feast pretend to live up to the “savage” stereotype in order to rid themselves of unwanted white dinner guests.

- “Wannabe Nation,” by Jesse Cooday, a contemporary artist of Tligit descent who lives and works in New York City.

“The First Nations Conference is a triennial cultural gathering at BSU designed to inform and entertain the community — Native and non-Native — by sharing the work of prominent Native artists and presenting educational speakers and panels on key issues that face the Native communities of Idaho,” said Gretchen Cotrell, conference co-chair. “It is an opportunity for the communities to meet, enjoy and discuss works and issues, and experience the cultural richness of the people of the First Nations of Idaho and the United States.”

The conference is free to all. It is sponsored by the Boise State University Cultural and Ethnic Diversity Board.

More information can be found at <http://www.boisestate.edu/firstnations/>

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