



University of Victoria Special Collections

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SC536

Aiyyana Maracle fonds

1. Fonds-level description

Title

Aiyyana Maracle fonds

Dates

1964-2016

Extent

20 boxes

Biographical sketch

Aiyyana Maracle (1950-2016) was a transgender Haudenosaunee artist and educator, born on Six Nations territory near Grand River, Ont., to Leonard and Kitty Maracle. She was one of six children, and was assigned male at birth. After her family was evicted from the reservation—due to her father’s lack of official Indian status—they moved to Rochester, N.Y. then Buffalo, N.Y. Maracle later became estranged from her family, and spent time in Vancouver, Toronto, Chippewa territory, and Montreal. She married and had four sons before beginning her gender transition at age 40, and ultimately returned to Six Nations territory in 2010 with her son.

Maracle was a multi-disciplinary artist, whose art explored her experience as a First Nations person and created and directed performance art, theatre pieces, and art installations. Her performance art includes “Gender Möbius” at grunt gallery (1995) and an untitled piece at “LIVE at the End of the Century” festival (1999). In 1992 she began curating queer and Indigenous arts festivals, including The Queer Series/Two Spirit Festival (grunt gallery, 1993) and women @ the front 30th anniversary exhibition (Western Front, 2003). She won Canada Council’s 1997 John Hirsch Prize for “the most artistically exciting new director of promise in Canadian Theatre.” She was also a seamstress, filmmaker, and painter, and created her garments and sets for her performance work.

As writer, Maracle wrote an unpublished autobiography, *Chronicle of a Transformed Woman*, as well as plays, exhibition anthologies, and essays, such as “Journey in Gender” published in *torquere* (2001). She took her MFA at Goddard College (2003-2005). From 2002 to 2007, Maracle taught courses and delivered guest lectures at Emily Carr Institute of Art and Design, Concordia University, and other Canadian and international universities. She returned to Six Nations territory in 2010 and from 2012, she co-facilitated Gender Journey, a peer support group in Brantford, Ont. She passed away at her home on April 24th, 2016.

Scope and content

The fonds documents Aiyyana Maracle life and work as performance artist and writer, creator of and participant in arts festivals, her committee and conference work, scholarship, teaching, Six Nations land rights activism, transgender visibility and health projects, and personal activities. Records consist of textual records, graphic material, analog and digital sound and video

recordings, and objects. Objects are comprised of garments, masks, accessories, animal bones and skins, and miscellaneous objects used in performance art and art installations.

The fonds is arranged into ten series: performance art, visual art, writing, scholarship, conferences and committees, Six Nations activism, two-spirit and transgender material, notebooks and loose notes, personal records, and bibliographic records.

Notes

Accessions: 2017-030, 2018-013, 2020-010

Confidential third-party information is restricted, and requires completion of a research agreement prior to access.

Related material: Leonard and Kitty Maracle fonds (RBSC-ARC-1351) available at University of British Columbia Library Rare Books and Special Collections:

<http://rbscarchives.library.ubc.ca/downloads/leonard-and-kitty-maracle-fonds.pdf>

Sources:

Couillard, Paul. "In Memoriam: Aiy yana Maracle." 7a*11d. 7a*11d International Festival of Performance Art, September 3, 2018. <http://7a-11d.ca/in-memoriam-aiyyana-maracle/>.

Page, Morgan M. "Aiy yana Maracle." The Queer Bible. The Queer Bible, March 2, 2017. <https://www.queerbible.com/queerbible/2017/7/11/aiyyana-maracle-by-morgan-m-page>.

2. Structure

Series 1. Performance art. 1964-2012.

Series consists of material related to performance art, plays, and festivals, produced by Aiiyana Maracle and others. Series also includes material from Maracle's residency at Banff Centre Aboriginal Arts Program.

Subseries 1. Writing. 2001-2012.

Subseries consists of manuscripts, notes, outlines, musical scores, and related art for films and plays. Titles include Whispers of the Grandmothers, Sometimes the Body Just Doesn't Match the Mind, T(h)ree Stories, Medicine Boy by Waawaate Fobister, Gender Mobius, musical score to Coyote and the Winter that Never Ends, Half-Bred, Catwalk, We Are Hoh tinh oh Shon:ni, and Women and Freedom Under Attack. Many items are undated.

Subseries 2. Textual records. 1964-2005.

Subseries consists of peripheral textual records related to performances, plays, and festivals. Documents include related correspondence, programs and booklets, notes, biographical statements and CVs, documentation, material from residency at Banff Centre, calendars, clippings and articles, and posters and flyers.

Subseries 3. Recordings. 1997-2009.

Subseries consists of digital and analog recordings of performances, including plays, performance art, and spoken word. Performances include Chronicle of a Transformed Women and other compilations of Aiiyana Maracle, and Witch Hunts & the Trials of the New Millennium, directed by Maracle. Venues include Counting Past 2 festival and Vogue Theatre in Vancouver, B.C. Videos are carried on VHS, DVM60, 1 ml cassette, 3/4" cassette, and DVD.

Subseries 4. Applications and grants. 1997-2002.

Subseries consists of applications to Canada Council for the Arts, CCA assessment of Bones, Banff Centre Studio Residency Agreement, and documentation regarding the John Hirsch Prize.

Series 2. Visual art. 1975-2014.

Series consists of paintings, drawings, stencils, prints, garments and accessories, photographs, and physical objects used in a variety of activities, including performances and artwork.

Subseries 1. Paintings, drawings, etc. 2002, n.d.

Subseries consists of paintings, sketchbook of drawings, prints, stencils, collage, and linocut created by Aiiyana Maracle. Subseries also contains art by Janice Toulouse and Rebecca Belmore. Most pieces are undated.

Subseries 2. Garments and accessories. 2014, n.d.

Subseries consists of garments created by Aiyiyana Maracle such as dresses, skirts, fur and fabric vests, jackets, masks and fur headpiece, and robes. Subseries also includes accessories such as handmade metal nipples, jewelry, handmade Chinese fan, and two leather foot pieces. Fur headpiece and tin box containing fur bracelets were featured in the 2014 Queering the International exhibition in Vancouver, B.C.'s Queer Arts Festival. Subseries also includes red and black blanket labelled "Small Pox Blanket."

Subseries 3. Photographs. 1975-1995.

Subseries consists of photographs, carried chiefly on slides. Subjects include self-portraits, performances, "Aiyiyana's gender slideshow," "High Heeled Moccasins," and Indigenous gatherings. Most photographs are undated.

Subseries 4. Physical objects. 2003, n.d.

Subseries consists of animal bones and skins, boxes, flute, perfume and lotion bottles, stones, Mohawk angel craft, two exit signs and kits used in performances, and copper star. Animal bones include owl skeleton and turtle shell with bag of bones. Subseries also contains empty scent container with "personal scent" description, which is a visitor souvenir from Shawna Dempsey and Lori Millan's 2003 performance "reminiscent."

Series 3. Writing. 1985-2004.

Series consists of poetry and prose by Aiyiyana Maracle and others. Most items are undated.

Subseries 1. Poetry and prose. 1985-1995, n.d.

Subseries consists of poems, prose, hymns, songs, and prayers written by Aiyiyana Maracle, as well as collaborations with Lee Maracle created prior to Aiyiyana Maracle's gender transition.

Subseries 2. Writing by others. 2004, n.d.

Subseries consists of writing by Aiyiyana Maracle's correspondents. Manuscripts include poems from Menominee writer Chrystos, Warren Arcan's draft manuscript for Reunion of Broken Parts, three-day novel written by Jan Kudelka, short story written by Anna Fuerstenberg, and writing by Maracle's sister.

Series 4. Scholarship. 1995-2007.

Series consists of material documenting Aiyiyana Maracle's academic research, her thesis composed at Goddard College's MFA residency program, essays, classes taught at Concordia University and McGill University, and applications and grants.

Subseries 1. Research. 2003-2007, n.d.

Subseries consists of research material used in pursuit of Aiyiyana Maracle's MFA thesis, her teaching at McGill University and Concordia University, and personal essays. Material includes academic articles and book chapters, reports, notes, ethics review, Goddard College handouts, and related correspondence.

Subseries 2. Writing. 1995-2005.

Subseries consists of essays, MFA residency thesis, and material towards Chronicle of a Transformed Women. Material also includes drafts and excerpts.

Subseries 3. Teaching. 2006-2007.

Subseries consists of material from Aiiyana Maracle's teaching at Concordia University, where she taught Native Literature, and McGill University, where she was a visiting scholar. Material includes presentations, syllabi, course outlines and coursepacks, correspondence, student and class information, book order forms and receipts, class work, student resources, photocopied stories and chapters, student evaluations, and questionnaires.

Subseries 4. Applications and grants. 2003-2007.

Subseries consists of scholarship-related applications and grants, including her application and award to Goddard College's MFA residency program from the National Aboriginal Achievement Foundation. Material also includes student loan applications, faculty biographies, related correspondence, and teaching application forms and information.

Series 5. Conferences and committees. 1997-2007.

Series consists of manuals, minutes, schedules, correspondence, reports, and financial documents from the following committees: Brant Historical Society Board, Human Rights Commission, Indigenous Women's Symposium, Critical Race Studies Conference, Symposium of Indigenous Cultures at McGill University, Subcommittee on First Peoples Equity at McGill University, Two-Spirit Women of First Nations Conference, Two Spirit and Trans Conference, Canadian Critical Race Conference, Resolutions and Ruptures: Sexual and Gender Diversity and the Spaces In-Between, Dirty Gender Secrets Conference, Dialogue Maker Series (2006-2007) at Simon Fraser University, National Coalition for Dialogue and Deliberation, LGBT Health Association, Zenith Foundation, Writing Trans Genres Conference, University of Guelph Sexuality Conference, and Greater Vancouver Native Cultural Society.

Series 6. Six Nations activism. 1994-2009.

Series consists of video recordings of protests, article photocopies, memorandums and speaking notes for Haudenosaunee land claim of Welland Canal Settlement, Six Nations Council meeting agendas and notes, related correspondence, documents from "Native Women Speak" meeting, and literature regarding archeology on Six Nations land.

Series also documents the 2008 Six Nations Pageant directed by Aiiyana Maracle, and includes video recordings, flyers, correspondence, financial records, and planning documents.

Series 7. Two-spirit and transgender material. 2001-2010.

Series consists of video recording of The Transsexuality Workshops presented by Marjorie Anne Napewastewin Schutzer, Drag King trading cards, correspondence with Mirrha Soleil Ross, document titled "2 Spirited People of the 1st Nations", material regarding peer support group creation and facilitation, and reports and publications.

Series 8. Notebooks and loose notes. 1992-2016.

Series consists of notebooks, loose notes, day planners, and calendars. Topics include essays, performances and events, art, contact information, transgender theory, surgery, panels, teaching, literature and videos, and her art residency. Most items are undated.

Series 9. Personal records. 1975-2016.

Series is arranged into four subseries: documents, photographs and videos, correspondence, and ephemera. Material includes official documents, ancestry and family records, records of gender affirmation surgery, health records, personal correspondence, financial records, manuals, and house plans.

Subseries 1. Documents. 1984-2016.

Subseries contains documents such as the will of Jeanne Marguerite France Carter, list of descendants of Henry Maracle, official documents and applications, family tree diagrams, several birth certificates, records of gender affirmation surgery, disability and health records, and literature from the BC Human Rights Commission on Disability.

Subseries 2. Photographs and videos. 1975-1995.

Subseries consists of personal photographs and videos. Many videos are unlabelled. Videos are housed on DVM60 cassettes, MiniDV cassettes (26 cassettes), and DVDs.

Subseries 3. Correspondence. 2003, n.d.

Subseries consists of personal and business correspondence.

Subseries 4. Miscellaneous and ephemera. 2005-2014, n.d.

Subseries consists of financial records, receipts, manuals and informational pamphlets, veterinary bills, house plans, and recipe for "Woooin' Salad". Subseries also contains unidentified 3.5 in. floppy disks (approx. 25).

Series 10. Bibliographic material. 1969-2015, n.d.