

Demian DinéYazhi'
**An Infected
Sunset
(Excerpt)**

01/01

Sometimes my hair is black fire sweeping
through an infected landscape polluted by the
rotting
corpses of white supremacists I imagine I am one
of my ancestors overlooking Tséyí' watching all
the corn fields ablaze and then someone hits the
fastforward button and then I'm suddenly
standing on the washington side of the columbia
river gorge watching a forest fire light up the sky
in the black womb of nite

I stop to blink my eyes and realize I'm actually
sitting on the opposite side of a computer screen
watching it documented in a .gif image and the
swell of devastation rolls over me like a musical
score and it is at this moment I am reminded that
my DNA predates the concept of a bitmap
image this is the way settler colonial trauma
settles into the body of the colonized we
unconsciously re-live the genocides and
brutalities inflicted against our ancestors the
shame the
rape the beatings the enslavement the white
bodies with their killing machines and unholy
structures of torture and discipline the distrust
the disease the disgust the deceit the
miseducation
and immoral fixations the flamboyant uniforms

my ancestors will not let me forget this and every
american flag is a warning sign even the one my
grandfather was given as a Code Talker

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Demian DinéYazhi' (born 1983) is an Indigenous Diné (Navajo) transdisciplinary artist born to the clans Naasht'ézhí Tábaqahá (Zuni Clan Water's Edge) & Tódích'íí'níi (Bitter Water). Growing up in the colonized border town of Gallup, New Mexico, the evolution of DinéYazhi's work has been influenced by his ancestral ties to traditional Diné culture and ceremony, matrilineal upbringing, the sacredness of land, and the importance of intergenerational knowledge. Through research, mining community archives, and social collaboration and activism, DinéYazhi' highlights the intersections of Radical Indigenous Queer Feminist identity and political ideology while challenging the white noise of the contemporary art movement. DinéYazhi' is the founder of the artist/activist initiative, R.I.S.E.: Radical Indigenous Survivance & Empowerment, which is dedicated to the education, perseverance, & evolution of Indigenous art & culture. DinéYazhi' also serves as co-editor of the zine *Locusts: A Post-Queer Nation Zine*. They are the recipient of the Henry Art Museum's Brink Award 2017 and will have a solo exhibition opening at the Henry Art Gallery, Seattle, WA in March 2018.

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