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Recontextaulizing Literature: A Podcast Project Dedicated to Celebrating and Broadcasting the Voices of Indigenous Authors and Storytellers

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Recontextualizing Literature

Recontextualizing Literature: A podcast project dedicated to celebrating and broadcasting the
voices of Indigenous authors and storytellers

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Abstract

This project is conducted with intention of exploring the sociocultural implications of a decentralized canon. Designed with Indigenous authors and storytellers in mind, this project perceives the way that literature and storytelling are improved by abandoning the universalized and Eurocentric literary canon and replacing it with complex and unique personal cultural contexts. As part of the overarching podcast project, this document looks to lay out a reading list that represents and enforces the power of recontextualized literature.

Recontextualizing Literature: A podcast project dedicated to celebrating and broadcasting the voices of Indigenous authors and storytellers

This project aims to explore the way that cultural context can strengthen writing through a decentralized canon. Within the storytelling that lies on cultural borderlines is a cornucopia of prime examples of recontextualized literature. Through examining the way that Indigenous authors and storytellers practice their craft we can gain a starting reference point to understanding recontextualized literature.

The first step in this process was recognizing that the current literary canon (the classics) is prevalently Eurocentric and based on the universalizing of culture that tends to accompany modernism. This led to questioning what effects this universalized and Eurocentric canon had on literature, and inversely what literature and writing looks like without the context of a prescribed canon.

Understanding the roles of Modernism and Postmodernism in history and how that has shaped today's cultural paradigm provides the next key piece to exploring this question. Cornell West's work about marginalized communities provides a strong basis for understanding the relation between individual context and the colossal ideas of Modernism and Postmodernism.

Bringing this all together is the pinnacle of the project; to present this background and theory in a digestible form for a general audience. And not only to do that, but to do so in a way that is most respectful and compassionate to the voices of the various First Nation's authors and storytellers. That is why the form of a podcast has been decided as ideal.

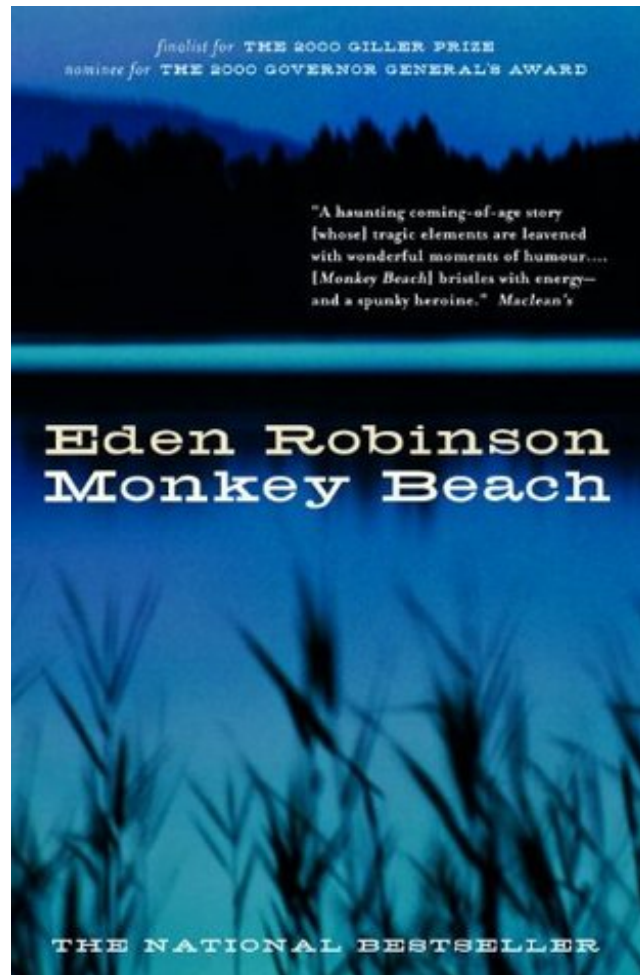
Ideally, this project would move forward by speaking with the authors themselves as well as other academics exploring this kind of work. In lieu of that work in the present moment, there

is a reading list that provides the authors and suggested works by them that inhabits and explores the complex realm of recontextualized literature.

These authors and storytellers are just the tip of the iceberg, but they have found a way to present literature that is decentralized from the Eurocentric canon and challenges storytelling form, becoming the sincerest form of self-expression that empowers the individual cultural experience. Without their work, this project would never have left the ground, so with all the love and gratitude possible, allow me to present the recontextualized literature of Indigenous Storytellers!

Authors

Eden Robinson

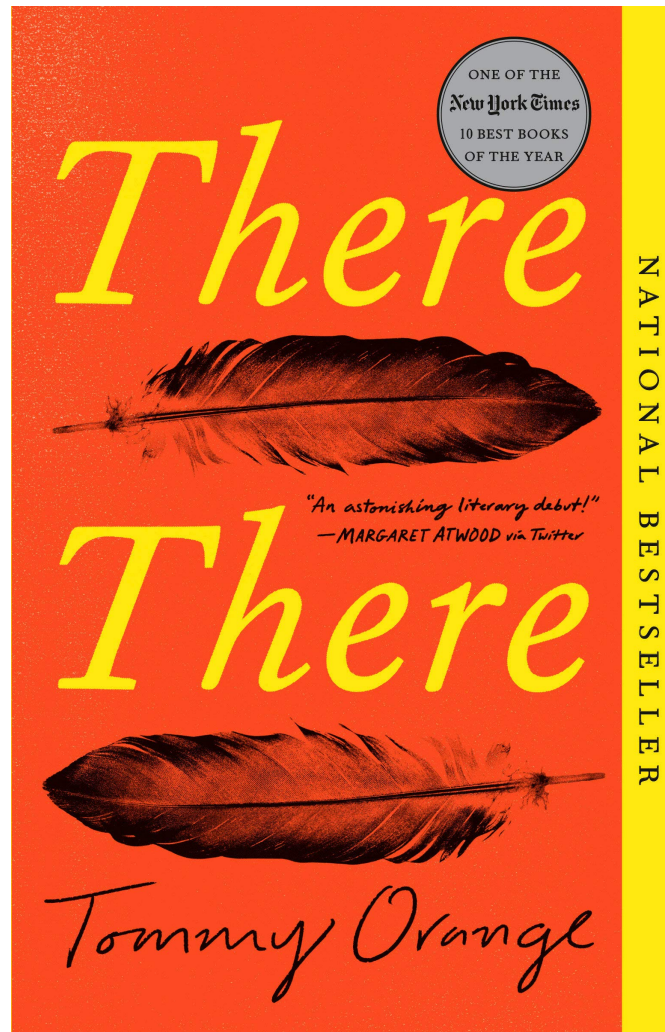


Monkey Beach

Eden Robinson is a Canadian author and member of both the Haisla and Heiltsuk First Nations.

Her novel, *Monkey Beach*, is a masterful narrative story and part of the cutting-edge genre named Indigigoth. The genre utilizes the dark aesthetic nature of gothic fiction to creatively depict the mystique and spiritual symbolism of Haisla culture. Making perfect use of the genre, *Monkey Beach* shows how decentering the gothic genre and basing it in alternative cultural bounds can be effective and bring a fresh, innovative style to an old genre.

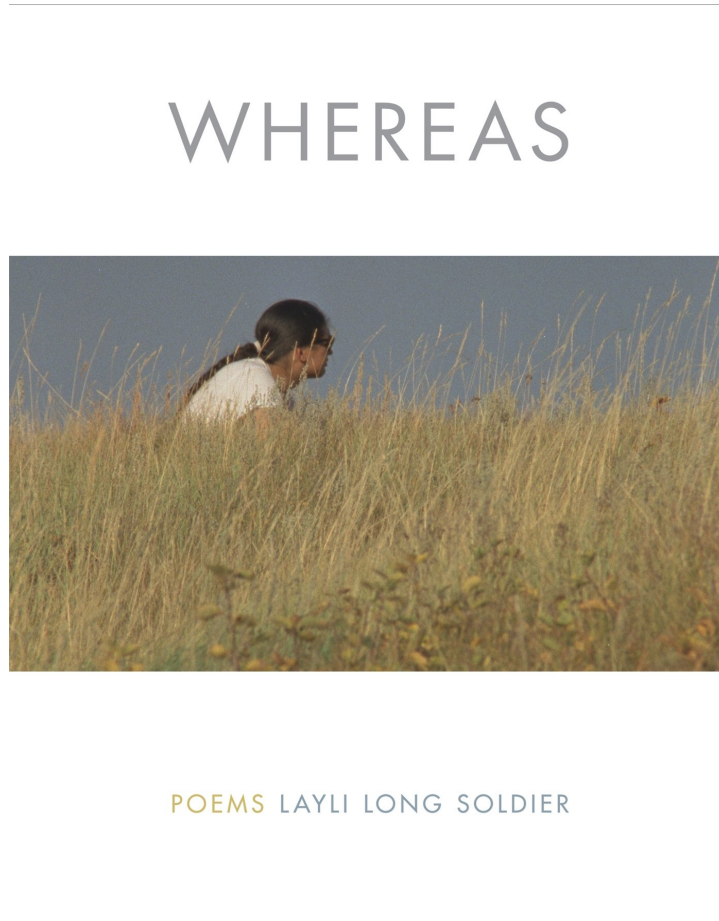
Tommy Orange



There There

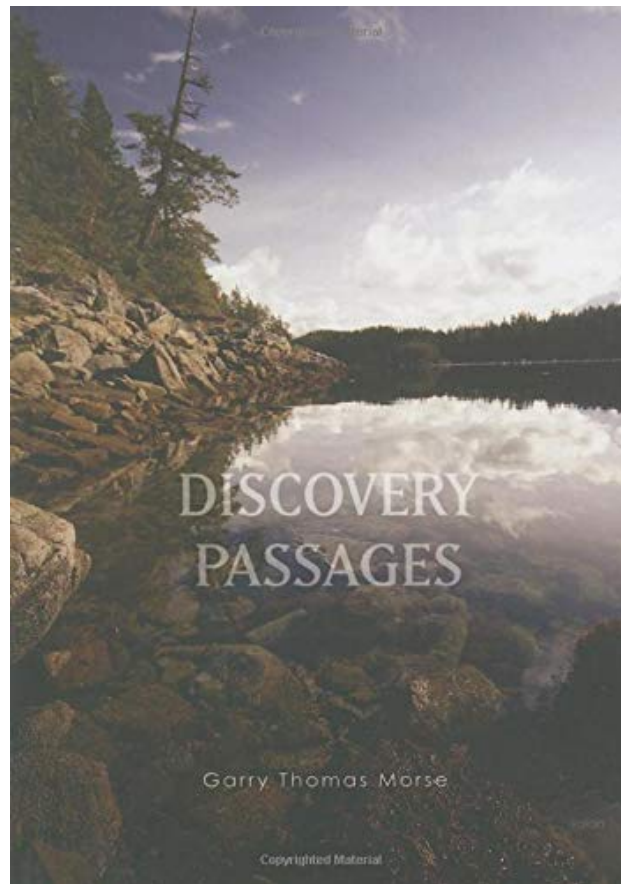
There There By Tommy Orange is a vivid ensemble story that grapples with questions of identity and place. Tommy Orange himself is self-proclaimed to be an “Urban Indian”, as he has grown up in Oakland, California while also being a citizen of the Cheyenne and Arapaho Nations of Oklahoma. This novel goes to amazing depths to understand that oft-confusing experience of living in America with such an identity, distinguishing *There There* as a uniquely empowering novel that harnesses and tackles identity with vigor and grace.

Poets

Layli Long Soldier*Whereas*

Layli Long Soldier is an outstanding poet, writer, artist, and activist. Although all her mediums are most definitely commendable, her poetry is the focus of this reading list. Her book *Whereas* smoothly reconfigures language and the art of poetry into a visual form that exemplifies Layli Long Soldier's style and flare. The subject matter is very serious, as Soldier takes on motherhood, loss, and law documents from the United States government related to First Nation's peoples. More than any other feature of this reading list, Layli Long Soldier's poetry really plays with form and embodies the concept of recontextualized literature.

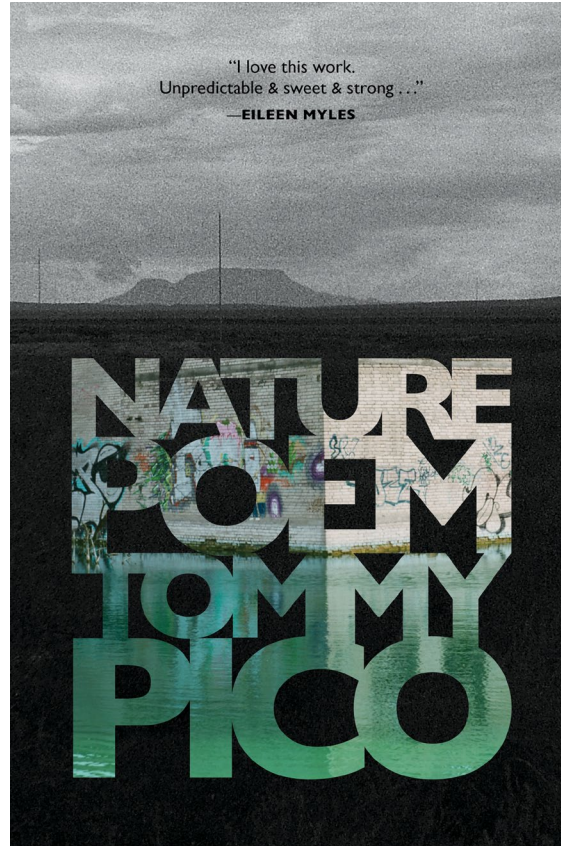
Garry Thomas Morse



Discovery Passages

Garry Thomas Morse is a Canadian poet and novelist of Kwakwaka'wakw descent. His book *Discovery Passages* is a pinnacle example of tying place and land into the experience and identity of the author. The poetry in *Discovery Passages* mainly reconciles with the colonized lands of his ancestral people, bringing readers on a read-along tour of areas like Alert Bay and Quadra Island. There's a lot of depth and history involved with *Discovery Passages* as Morse draws on a multitude of voices to bring about a discourse for the many divisive and often cruel government laws and bans pertaining to the Indigenous people of Canada. A gripping read, *Discovery Passages* is both effective and engaging in a way that stands to be studied more.

Tommy Pico



Nature Poem

Tommy Pico is a man of many hats. He mainly uses the mediums of poetry, podcasting, and tv show writing, but his vivacious and energetic style seems to be capable of moving to anything. Tommy Pico engages with subjects of indigeneity, queerness (conjunctively referred to as ‘indigiqueer’), urban life, dating, and food. Really, Tommy Pico’s writing is so deeply written with his hilarious but genuine personality involved that his poetry is truly defining for recontextualized literature. His book *Nature Poem* is no different, as Pico brings up the problematic view of indigenous people as noble savages and how that effects Pico’s own writing of nature. The book is a part of a series of four that Pico refers to as the “Teebs tetralogy” which includes his other 3 books: *IRL*, *Junk*, and *Feed*.

Alternative Storytellers

Black Belt Eagle Scout*At the Party With my Brown Friends*

Black Belt Eagle Scout is a musical group and recording project of the amazing Katherine Paul. The musical project has been gaining traction and critical acclaim, even being compared to some insanely big name bands like Nirvana and Mazzy Star. Her music is influenced by the long musical tradition of the Coast Salish people, but is also heavily influenced by the grunge scene and wrapped in a layer of dream-pop. Her music fully fits into a recontextualized form of storytelling, as her most recent album, *At the Party With y Brown Friends*, heavily employs her experience as a Radical Indigenous queer feminist. A powerful artist and amazing storyteller, Black Belt Eagle Scout is an artist to keep an eye on for sure.

Kent Monkman



The Four Continents

Kent Monkman's art is both amazing and provocative for all the right reasons. He is a Canadian First Nations artist of Cree descent who uses a myriad of art mediums as well as employing use of performance art. His works generally explore vivid images that challenge socio-cultural issues of indigeneity, sexuality, history, and political topics alike. His work is much better seen than explained, but I will strongly warn that the provocative nature of his work is definitely NSFW (Not Safe For Work).