

Bone Hill Draft:

Learning Outcomes:

- Be able to actively participate in conversations with fellow classmates responding to a performance
- Practice intergroup communication skills - including active listening, expressing emotions, asking questions, addressing conflicts across social identities (Adams, Bell, Goodman & Joshi, 2016)
- Analyze the connections between Afro-Indigenous expressive forms and American history
- Engage autobiographical storytelling, self-inventory, and introspection to achieve community connection and cultural competency
- Be able to acknowledge different identities and systems of oppression
- Course specific Learning Objective

Learning Goals:

- Connecting with Classmates
- Creating Community Through Storytelling and Performance
- Engaging New Topics and Terminology

Materials Needed – Included in Packet: Highlight = needs to be added

- Resource Guide - Created in collaboration with L.Marie Avila
- Spring 2023 Martha Redbone Bone Hill Curriculum
- Experiential Learning Tracks Handouts – Track 1 and Track 2
- Final Reflection Assignment
- Pre and Post Surveys Spring 2023
- Considerations for the Performance (Student Handout)
- Free tickets to Performance at Lied Center on April 7th, 2023
- In-Class Workshop – To be Completed In Class after Performance
- Selections and Interviews that are not already linked for materials will be added shortly

Spring 2023 Martha Redbone “Bone Hill” Curriculum

Information about the Grant:

The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation has awarded a \$466,000 grant over a three-year period to the University of Kansas’s Lied Center to support the “Utilizing the Performing Arts to Enhance Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (DEI) Initiatives” project. The project will consist of the creation, implementation, and assessment of a new curriculum at KU that will explore issues of diversity, equity and inclusion through the performing arts. The DEI curriculum will have an interdisciplinary approach and will feature Lied Center guest performing artists who represent and uplift marginalized identities and voices through their work. The implementation of the new curriculum will provide the opportunity for faculty, staff, and students to engage in meaningful and immersive workshops, presentations and class discussions centered on the visiting performing artists, exploring topics and themes relating to social justice, marginalized identities, intersectionality and more. Project members include Anthea Scouffas, Jancita Warrington (Menominee, Potawatomi, Ho Chunk Nations), Darren Canady, Emily Gullickson, and Elizabeth Esch. We also want to thank the Center for Teaching Excellence for their continued direct support and collaboration, Center for Undergraduate Research, University Honors Program for their collaboration and support in creating this new format for the curriculum.

We also are grateful to our Mellon Scholars that are working with the Andrew W. Mellon foundation grant this year. They include: L. Marie Avila, KU Libraries; Sean Gullickson, Spanish & Portuguese; Julius Kyakuwa, Music Education; Sarah Ngoh, English; Megan Pacey, Social Welfare; Markus Potter, Theatre & Dance; Kwangok Song, Curriculum & Teaching Emily Tummons, Latin American and Caribbean Studies; and Fithawee Tzeggai, Sociology.

Information about the Lied Center:

The Lied Center of Kansas serves the state’s flagship university, students and the greater community by functioning as a catalyst for the arts, creativity, engagement and community building through a variety of activities: presenting a series of diverse, relevant and world-class artists which activates our community to strengthen its connection with the arts. Constant public feedback and conversation shape the Lied series; engaging our community through experiential learning in the performing arts and our world by providing opportunities to attend, explore, participate and create; and serve as a communal gathering space for shared experience, connection, conversation and the celebration of achievement.

Information about Martha Redbone and “Bone Hill”:

Martha Redbone Full bio:

Native & African-American vocalist/songwriter/composer/educator, Martha Redbone, is known for her unique gumbo of folk, blues, and gospel from her childhood in Harlan County, Kentucky infused with the eclectic grit of pre-gentrified Brooklyn. Inheriting the powerful vocal range of her gospel-singing African American father and the resilient spirit of her mother’s Cherokee/Shawnee/Choctaw culture, Redbone broadens the boundaries of American Roots music. With songs and storytelling that share her life experience as a Native and Black woman and mother in the new millennium, Redbone gives voice to issues of social justice, bridging traditions from past to present, connecting cultures, and celebrating the human spirit.

Her album *The Garden of Love- Songs of William Blake*, produced by Nitty Gritty Dirt Band founder/Grammy Winner John McEuen is an unexpected twist — “a brilliant collision of cultures” (The New Yorker) — Redbone’s magnificent voice, Blake’s immortal words, and a masterful cornucopia of roots music (blues, gospel, bluegrass, soul and traditional Southeastern Woodlands). Featured on All Things Considered the album released on her own imprint Blackfeet Productions rose to the Top Ten on Amazon Folk Charts for many weeks and has become the bedrock of her live shows bringing audiences to their feet with her fiery old time mountain gospel singing and foot-stomping energy.

Redbone and her long-term collaborator/husband, composer/pianist/producer Aaron Whitby are called “the little engine that could [by their] band of NYC’s finest blues and jazz musicians” (Larry Blumenthal/Wall Street Journal). From grassroots beginnings at powwows across Indian Country and in the underground clubs of NYC Redbone has built a passionate fan base with her mesmerizing presence and explosive live shows. Her debut *Home of the Brave* — “Stunning album, the kind of woman who sets trends” (Billboard) — garnered extremely positive critical attention while her sophomore album *Skintalk* — described as the soulful sound of “Earth, Wind and Fire on the Rez” (J Poet, Native Peoples Magazine — took her music to Europe and the Far East. Albums *Skintalk* and *The Garden of Love: Songs of William Blake* are recognized in the Library Collection and “Up Where We Belong: Native Musicians in Popular Culture” exhibits in the Smithsonian National Museum of the American Indian in Washington DC.

Redbone is Composer for the Public Theater’s 2019 production of *For Colored Girls Who Have Considered Suicide/ When the Rainbow is Enuff*, a revival/re-imagining of the 1976 classic choreopoem by the late Ntozake Shange. Redbone joined the all-women-of-color Creative Team to celebrate the author’s historical work and legacy, and enjoyed a 4-week extended run through December that received rave reviews with notable mentions for their team’s original compositions and score — “supreme music...brilliant” (NY Daily News).

The Redbone and Whitby's recent work is [BONE HILL](#), an interdisciplinary musical theater work inspired by the lives of Redbone's family in the hills of coal-mining Appalachia. A multi-racial Cherokee and African American family, they are permanently bonded to their culture, identity, and the mountain despite its violent past and the ever-changing laws of the land that threaten to extinguish them. Commissioned by Joe's Pub/NEA and Lincoln Center for the Arts, Bone Hill – The Concert is touring extensively nationwide and is a recipient of the NEFA National Theater Project Creation and Touring Grant and National Performance Network Creation Fund. ([read more](#))

Bone Hill: The Concert

Presented as a dramatic musical work with a cast of eight actors/musicians, BONE HILL: THE CONCERT is a devised, interdisciplinary theater work inspired by [Martha Redbone's](#) family lineage in the Appalachian Mountains. An epic story of one woman's return to her homeland on Black Mountain and the coal mines of Harlan County, KY where her family have dwelled for centuries.

Spanning the lives and stories of four generations of women in a Cherokee family Redbone travels back in time to her own childhood and beyond into the memories and tales of her ancestors. It is a story about the family's connection to the land – the simplicity and sacredness of that connection and the ruptures that threaten to extinguish it. The journey brings to light an important piece of American history that has remained untold.

Created by Martha Redbone and Aaron Whitby, with all music and lyrics by Martha Redbone and Aaron Whitby.

Introduction to Structure:

“There are opportunities that take you outside of the classroom and enable you to have hands-on experiences in a variety of settings. By taking part in engaged learning, you can develop and expand the knowledge and skills you've gained through coursework by turning theory into practice”.

-KU Experiential Learning, 2021

In Spring 2022, the Mellon Team collaborated with the University Honors Program for the Common Cause curriculum. Out of our collaboration, we created multiple tracks that allow students to dive deeper into topics related to the artist and performance. With their permission, we are utilizing this new curriculum format moving forward. It is our hope that students and instructors will choose a track that works best for their class and interests. If students and instructors create a mix of the tracks or create their own, we would love to hear about it. While we encourage instructors to remix and revise the course materials - and infuse the project with materials tying the performance to your course content, please bear in mind the artists' goals of highlighting the American Afro-Indigenous experience.

Storytelling & the Performing Arts:

The performing and creative arts provide unique, expressive ways of rendering stories and narratives. In the same way that historians might look to primary source material or an archaeologist might inspect long-buried artifacts to reconstruct the stories, values, and experiences of a culture, performing artists often use dance, music, movement, visual art, symbolism and text to get at the more abstract experiences of human existence. As you experience this curriculum, think about the ways that the performances you see use their unique tools to bring a new perspective or lens to information you might encounter via news articles, scientific inquiry, or statistical data. Challenge yourself to imagine what happens if you put those experiences and perspectives together to tell or hear a more complex story.

Experiential Learning Tracks:

You will choose from one of the two following tracks listed below. Throughout each of the tracks, you will have the opportunity to dive further into each area.

Choose from one of the two following tracks:

- Track 1: Paper Genocide
- Track 2: The Bones are Talking


Each track includes five areas:

- Foundational Pieces
- Go More In-Depth
- Experiential Learning
- In-Class Workshop
- Final Reflection

Each person will complete the Martha Redbone's "Bone Hill" Reflection. **This is a required part of the curriculum.**


Track 1: Paper Genocide

Foundational Pieces: Choose 2

- Interview with Jancita Warrington (Menominee, Potawatomi, and Ho-Chunk Nations)
- Martha Redbone's Work:
 - Full Podcast recording of *Bone Hill*: <https://familyghostspodcast.com/>
 - [Martha Redbone "Bone Hill" - Caught My Eye](#)
 -  My Life as a Musician in Black and Red | Martha Redbone | TEDxLagunaBl...
- [The Black Indigenous Afro Indigenous Experience - Webinar](#)
- Naylor, Celia. African Cheorkees in Indian Territory: From Chattel to Citizens. Introduction pgs. 1-24
- <https://www.propublica.org/series/the-repatriation-project>

Go More In-Depth (Select 3-5):

Historical and Current Documentation in North America

-  [A Conversation With Native Americans on Race | Op-Docs](#)
- <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/24/us/politics/cherokee-nation-black-freedmen.html>
- Naylor, Celia. African Cheorkees in Indian Territory: From Chattel to Citizens. Chapter 3: Conceptualizing Constructing African Indian Racial and Cultural Identities in Antebellum Indian Territory
- [Code Switch What is Blood Quantum?](#)
 - Code Switch: It's Not Just about the Blood:
<https://www.npr.org/transcripts/583753149>
- <https://guides.loc.gov/chronicling-america-dawes-act-commission>
- [All My Relations Podcast Beyond Blood Quantum](#)

Afro-Indigeneity in Indian Country:

- [All My Relations Black Native History with Dr. Tiya Miles](#)
- Miles, Tiya. Ties that Bind: the story of an Afro-Cherokee family in slavery and freedom
 - Introduction pgs. 36-45
 - Part One: Bone of my Bone - Slavery, Race, Nation - East: Captivity pgs. 45-62
- Black Reconstruction in Indian Territory
 - <https://15minutehistory.org/podcast/episode-130-black-reconstruction-in-indian-territory/>

Course Related Materials:

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Experiential Learning:

Required event:

- Attend *Bone Hill* on April 7th, 2023 at the Lied Center of Kansas.

<https://lied.ku.edu/?event=martha-redbone-2023>

Select 2 Opportunities for Experiential Learning:

- KU Powwow and Indigenous Cultures Festival
- Course Specific Program/Event
- Campus and Community Events
 - Campus and Community Events will be available on the KU Events Calendar

In-Class Workshop

- Complete In-Class Workshop “Reclamation” after performance


Final Reflection Assignment

- Complete Final Reflection Assignment

Track 2:



The Bones are Talking: Reclaiming Indigenous pasts, presents, and futures

Foundational Pieces:

- Interview with Jancita Warrington (Menominee, Potawatomi, and Ho-Chunk Nations)
- Martha Redbone's Work:
 - Full Podcast recording of *Bone Hill*: <https://familyghostspodcast.com/>
 - [Martha Redbone "Bone Hill" - Caught My Eye](#)
 -  My Life as a Musician in Black and Red | Martha Redbone | TEDxLagunaBl...
- [The Black Indigenous Afro Indigenous Experience - Webinar](#)
- Naylor, Celia. African Cheorkees in Indian Territory: From Chattel to Citizens. Introduction pgs. 1-24
- <https://www.propublica.org/series/the-repatriation-project>

Go More In-Depth: Choose 3-5 from Each Section

Afro-Indigenous Storytelling and Futures

- [Black and Native Futures: Liberation and Sovereignty with Nikkita Oliver](#)
- [Black Native Kinship with Amber Starks](#)
- What does it mean to be Afro-Indigenous
 -  **Nizhoni Elizabeth Smocks on what it means to be Afro-Indigenous**
- <https://indiancountrytoday.com/news/how-an-afro-indigenous-tiktok-creator-shares-his-culture>
- https://www.tiktok.com/@kararoselles/video/7169423502230080814?is_from_webapp=1&sender_device=pc&web_id=7171890561937655338
- [Black History Month Interview Feature: Amber Starks on Blackness and Indigeneity](#)
- [Exploring the Afro-Indigenous experience](#)
-  The Love Songs of W. E. B. Du Bois: A book talk with author Honorée Jeffers (04-1...
- <https://www.natalieball.com/press>
- <https://americanindian.si.edu/ancestors-know/reflections/afro-indigenous-relations-in-a-reimagined-future/>

Reclamation for Pasts, Presents and Futures,

- [Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act](#)
- University of Kansas:
 - <https://www.kcur.org/education/2022-10-09/ku-says-it-will-start-returning-american-indian-ancestral-remains-and-sacred-objects>
 - <https://nativenewsonline.net/sovereignty/university-of-kansas-says-its-has-native-american-remains-in-museum-collection>
 - <https://lawrencekstimes.com/2022/09/22/ku-students-mourn-ancestors/>

- <https://apnews.com/article/travel-religion-museums-native-americans-kansas-3228f790915f77b8311a13ee18b9f59e>
- <https://landback.org/>
- [The Kaw will reunite with a sacred rock that Lawrence used as a monument to white people](#)
- [CARLISLE INDIAN SCHOOL DIGITAL RESOURCE CENTER](#)
- [Indigenous Futures Photography Illuminative](#)
- Natalie Ball:
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xrNFmCAuzkQ>
 - <https://www.natalieball.com/press>
- Episodes from Reservation Dogs Season 1 and 2 on Hulu and FX
- [The Military Pledged to Remove Unexploded Bombs From This Island. Native Hawaiians Are Still Waiting.](#)

Experiential Learning:

Required event:

- Attend *Bone Hill* on April 7th, 2023 at the Lied Center of Kansas.
<https://lied.ku.edu/?event=martha-redbone-2023>

Select 2 Opportunities for Experiential Learning:

- Events to be added here
- KU Powwow and Indigenous Cultures Festival
- Course Specific Program/Event
- Campus and Community Events
 - Campus and Community Events will be available on the KU Events Calendar

In-Class Workshop

- Complete In-Class Workshop “Reclamation” after performance

Final Reflection Assignment

- Complete Final Reflection Assignment

Spring 2023 – Reflection Assignment
Utilizing the Performing Arts to Enhance Diversity, Equity, Inclusion (DEI)
Initiatives. Funded by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation. Lied Center of Kansas.

Throughout the process of this curriculum, we ask that you keep notes – this can include a notebook, on a notes app on a phone. To ensure better reflection at the end of the project, it is important to take notes. Jot down things that surprised you, made you feel certain emotions, etc. How does this performance allow you to notice or experience your own body in a new or different way?

Questions for Reflection Assignment:

- a. Choose a track outlined from the introductory materials:
 - a. Track 1: Paper Genocide
 - b. Track 2: The Bones are Talking
- b. Attend Required Performance of *Bone Hill*
 - a. As soon as you can afterwards, write down three to four moments in both experiences that either made you laugh, blew your mind, or made you say “Huh. I never thought of it that way before.” Think about your own journey with some aspect of your identity. How would you render that story to provide a moment of transformation for yourself? Or your audience?
- c. In about 500-750 words (30 minutes), discuss the connections you’ve made across your educational learning experiences. What track did you select? What were your experiences like?
- d. How did you feel about engaging with the selected viewing and reading materials. Describe some key takeaways from your experiential learning opportunities. What did you learn about your own identities during this experience? How do the performing arts help us build connections with those we share communities?”
- e. Please include your selected track and your checklist (which materials/opportunities you engaged with) with the final submission.

Considerations for the Performance:

Experiencing a live performance is dynamic by design. When you are in the same physical space as Martha Redbone and *Bone Hill*, these artists intend to affect you on a palpable, human level. But for that to happen, you have to be an active and engaged collaborator in the experience. The best way to do that is to do some simple tracking during the piece. The following questions will be ones that you need to consider while at the performance.

Questions for Engaging a Performance:

- f. The best way to do that is to do some simple tracking during the piece. Pay attention to:
- g. What visuals catch your eye? What “pictures” are being created by the artists?
- h. How is the space being used? Does it feel expansive? Does it look compact?
- i. What’s in the soundscape? What are the textures of the music that you hear? What sounds exist that are NOT music?
- j. How are the human bodies you see affected by the above? What is the relationship between body, voice, sound, and space in this performance?
- k. What story is being told? What are the major points of that story?
- l. Now this one is major so make sure you’re giving it some attention: What emotions do you feel throughout the piece? Why? What moments arrest you? What moments leave you with questions?
- m. After the performance finishes, take just a few seconds to write down a list of sensory words, adjectives, or emotions you’re left with. Use these to form questions for the artists and as artifacts to explore during the rest of the curriculum.
- n. How does this performance allow you to notice or experience your own body in a new or different way?

In Class Writing Workshop: Reclamation

Who's Haunting You?

Take some moments and write down everything you think about when you think of your "origins." Maybe it's members of your family tree. Maybe it's your hometown. Maybe it's a migration story. Maybe it's the schools you or your siblings or your parents attended. Maybe it's the food and recipes you grew up eating. Maybe it's medical and physical dilemmas that don't have proper explanations. Jot down everything you can about these origin images, ideas, and narratives in a series of notes.

Pause.

Look back at your notes.

Ask yourself: What do I wish that I knew more about here? Is something missing? Is someONE missing? Which of the details/notes that you wrote down feel like the sketchiest or most ethereal or cause you to say "Huh - where did THAT memory or idea come from!?!?" Highlight these notes.

Based on your class discussion of *Bone Hill* and your "origin" notes, think about where the concept of *erasure* might be showing up in your own biography. Are there people whose lives have made your own life possible yet whose stories you don't know? Are there places you've lived where certain community members have been marginalized or whose day-to-day lives you never considered?

What person - living or dead, real or imagined - could hold the experiences and knowledge that you have identified as having been erased? Describe that person. Who are they? Where do/did they live? When do/did they live? What relationship do you have to them?

The Reflection

Write a letter to the person you just defined and described. Introduce yourself, the identities you hold, and the things, people, and places that connect you to that person. Imagine what it would be like to fill the gaps of your knowledge? Ask that person those questions. What does reclamation look like and feel like to you? Express that here. What kind of response would you like to receive from this person?