

## ***“Body Speaking to Body” Lydia Cheshewalla, 2022***



“Body Speaking to Body” is an immersive exhibition that invites the viewer to examine their relationship to self and nature. Working with found objects and artifacts from the natural world, Cheshewalla brings these “ ecological ambassadors” to gently reintroduce the viewer to our environment. We all come from nature and are made of natural elements, but too often in our contemporary culture people feel isolated from the land. Nature is one of our greatest teachers, the land is full of metaphor and lessons. To be disconnected from nature, not only are we losing out on knowledge, but we are also emboldened to make decisions that adversely affect the environment and in turn ourselves.

Utilizing interactive installations, projections and written prompts, this highly conceptual show urges the viewer to reinvent their assumptions about “bodies.” With an aim towards healing and repair, Cheshewalla asks us to consider oppressive forces in our culture that serve to disrupt relationships between each other and the land we live upon. In this exhibition she provides a space for the re-ignition of conversation and communion between bodies.



*“One healing  
action applied  
anywhere,  
applies  
everywhere.”*



### ***Meet the Artist!***

Lydia Cheshewalla is a transdisciplinary artist from Oklahoma, living and working in motion throughout the ecological landscape of the Great Plains. As an Osage woman, her work primarily focuses on community, emotional awareness, environmental justice, ephemerality, kinship, and art as healing action. She is currently working on becoming.

## ***Make a Friend in Nature***

Lydia Cheshewalla's "Body Speaking to Body" exhibition invites the viewer to examine their relationships with nature. This activity invites you to develop a direct relationship with something in nature.

### ***Essential Questions***

Who did you make friends with?

How did the exercise feel at first?

How did it feel once you finished?

What did you like about your friend?

Have you ever spoken to nature in this way before?

What do you think is the purpose of this exercise?



1. Go out into a stretch of outdoors, this could be your own yard, a park, the prairie, anywhere that is accessible to you. Spend some time meandering around and engaging your senses. Listen to the sounds, take in the color, lights and shadows, touch things, smell, etc. Eventually settle on one body to engage with - a blade of grass, a tree, an insect, a patch of soil... it's up to you!
2. Introduce yourself! Say hello, share your name, say it's nice to meet you. Express your intention to become friends and spend a little time together.
3. Learn more about your friend. Speak aloud the observations you can make. "I notice, friend, you have 2 round leaves at the top of you." "I notice, friend, that you're softer than I expected."
4. Play together. Find a small game to play with your new friend. Maybe you take turns tickling each other, or playing peek-a-boo, or perhaps you just chat about your feelings. Find some way to connect.
5. Document your friendship. Use a camera to photograph your friend. Or sketch a drawing of your friend.
6. Thank your friend for their time. As you make your way out of nature, consider the essential questions.