

**JET REFLECTIONS: INDIGENOUS ECO-SOCIAL TECHNOLOGIES  
FEATURING LYLA JUNE TRANSCRIPTION**

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Lyssa Paluay: In the spring.

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Lyssa Paluay: So we're very excited to welcome her here. This is late afternoon.

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Lyssa Paluay: Lyla, and I also would like to begin this conversation with a land acknowledgement, so I'm

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Lyla June: Sure. Hi, everyone.

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Lyla June: Thanks so much for being

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Lyla June: Here, I'm really happy to work with all of you. It's been a joy to work with Lyssa for the past couple years. This land acknowledgement is to honor the fact that MassArt is on the traditional homelands of the Wampanoag Pawtucket and Massachusett people

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Lyla June: And I wanted to explain a little bit about land acknowledgement for those who may have not be very familiar with it. It's something that really started sparking in Canada, Australia, New Zealand, other areas where

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Lyla June: Indigenous settler relations are a little bit more advanced than here in the US.

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Lyla June: And the US is starting to pick it up and it's really about acknowledging that we are on indigenous land that we're on stolen land.

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Lyla June: And really situating ourselves within that understanding to try and heal and begin to recognize and understand the colonial the rather painful colonial history that we are a part of

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Lyla June: And to kind of

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Lyla June: Position that front and center before anyone speaks and that happens a lot of a lot of events. Now, these days, I do want to note that there is a little limitation to that there are some criticisms of land acknowledgement that it can be performative or that it can be superficial

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Lyla June: I think it is valuable to do, personally, I think it the Native community and others have been

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Lyla June: encouraging us and inviting us to move that land acknowledgement further to be participatory in active solidarity with indigenous peoples.

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Lyla June: In other words, to not just say, "Hey, this is the land of the Wampanoag" but to give that land back, wherever possible, and also to

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Lyla June: Remember that it's not enough to only speak these things, but to live it and practice it which Massart is very interested in doing. For example, giving gallery space for the Wampanoag Pawtucket Massachusetts people

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Lyla June: Those are great examples of ways we can not only say these things, but really embody them and start to support indigenous communities in their journeys to liberation and

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Lyla June: Really just health of their people, their ideas, their languages, their children, their elders and the lens that we all depend on. So I'll stop there. Thank you, Lyssa.

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Thank you, Lyla.

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Lyssa Paluay: I'd like to start in talking about the title of this talk, and it is "Indigenous Eco-Social Technologies" as we were preparing for this.

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Lyssa Paluay: Lyla said something to me a few weeks ago and in our conversation and I'm just so excited to get into understanding more the layers.

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Lyssa Paluay: Of the description of this title. So can you take us through that indigenous eco-social technologies.

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Lyla June: Yeah, um,

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Lyla June: So my doctoral research is looking at the intersection

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Lyla June: Of

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amymac: Indigenous food systems and

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Lyla June: Indigenous land management. In other words, how did Native people on this land, not just survive, but actually thrive and really correcting the record to say

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Lyla June: These nations. We don't just call them tribes, we call them nations, because they really we're at that scale densely populated the land.

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Lyla June: And manage the land extensively. So I'll get into a few examples of that land management.

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Lyla June: To kind of show you just how widespread and sophisticated these land management techniques really were and how very few of us understand that we are standing on

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Lyla June: Incredible legacies of indigenous civilizations that may not have left a mark on the earth that we can see today because we knew if you left a mark you had done something disrespectful. But nevertheless, we're there. And we're extensive.

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Lyla June: So that's really what my doctoral research is focused on, but I think it intersects with the art world because underlying all of these practices all of these ecological practices, everything from low intensity burns that rejuvenate the soil.

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Lyla June: Eliminate competing vegetation from the food

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Lyla June: plants prevent catastrophic fires, you know, California was burned by native peoples for thousands and thousands of years, very methodically very strategically to prevent catastrophic fires like we're seeing today.

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Lyla June: Everything from burning to

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Lyla June: clam habitat generation anthropogenic clam beds and really increasing its expanding habitat for certain food animals everything to planting kelp forests that actually increase the surface area for the herring to spawn.

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Lyla June: And also managing grasslands, the Great Plains, you know, we're managed in such a manner that the buffalo came to us, you know, we didn't necessarily follow them around. They followed

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Lyla June: the habitats that we managed and created with periodic burning and really taking care of seeds and biodiversity. So the reason this intersects with the art world, I think.

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Lyla June: is that underlying all of these practices all of these really fascinating and interesting ways that native people used to manage entire landscapes and bio regions. Underlying all that is value, symbols, concepts, everything that art has the power to convey and everything that art...

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Lyla June: Almost, you could say has a responsibility to convey and the way that art really

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Lyla June: works and sculpt the ideas within our minds that give rise to our everyday social practices. For example, let's take the music of the 1960s.

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Lyla June: A lot of this music started to spread ideas about equality about justice and even though this was just art, it started to impact the way people lived the way people thought and ultimately the practices they carried out in everyday life.

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Lyla June: And so I think that every one of your artistic practices, has that ability to influence the realm of the thoughts which can then influence how people live. So going back to this term eco-social technology.

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Lyla June: Let me give you a an example.

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Lyla June: So I'm 31

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Lyla June: When I was 14 years old I got my first menstruation. My first period in our terminology. My first moon time

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Lyla June: And in my culture as a Diné woman I'm from the Tsétséhestâhese clan of the Diné nation. I should have said that to start, but we are indigenous to what is now called New Mexico, Colorado, Utah, Arizona.

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Lyla June: So in my culture when a woman has her first menstruation. We have a four day ceremony to celebrate her

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Lyla June: And in this four day ceremony, the entire community comes together.

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Lyla June: And they come to pray for her. They come to congratulate her in her recent insurance into womanhood. They come to celebrate the blood as a symbol of life.

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Lyla June: And my mother didn't have that because of the boarding schools, you know, we put a lot of native people in these boarding schools and took away the culture. So I was the first one to have a Kinaaldá in

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Lyla June: five generations in my family. They brought it back. And so I run every morning to the east run every evening.

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Lyla June: To the east, and that's part of the the ceremonial teachings of womanhood, but both thing I want to talk about within this ceremony is the corn.

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Lyla June: The, the role of corn in this ceremony. The young woman will grind corn. We have a way of grinding corn by stone, with stone. And she will do this for four days, and she will grind several sacks of dried hard corn.

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Lyla June: And she will end up with like a little small mountain of cornmeal, powderized corn kernels and she will work very hard to create this corn

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Lyla June: mountain. And on the fourth day they will put it into the ground. They'll create a cake batter and they'll take this cornmeal add water to it.

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Lyla June: And everyone will work together to serve this batter. They have bunch of buckets. And it's just a big, big cake, so it takes a lot of batter and a lot of stirring.

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Lyla June: And then they will pour it into the ground. We dig about this deep of a hole [demonstrated on the video] and it's about four to five feet in diameter.

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Lyla June: It's like a big, flat cylinder and then we line that ground with corn husks and we make it to where once we pour the batter in that batter will only touch the nice clean corn husks and then we ceremonially cover that with more corn husks very sacred,

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Lyla June: very sacred process because we believe that

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Lyla June: The, the quality of this cake will determine the quality of her life. So you got to make the cake good.

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Lyla June: And so

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Lyla June: When the cake is done, you know, we cook it in the we bake it in the ground.

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Lyla June: Lined with corn husk and we have little oak branches, and those are light enough that they don't

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Lyla June: They're not heavy on the cake and actually make a depression on the cake. And so we will bake it all night long with a fire on top.

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Lyla June: And during that night the medicine people in our language, the word for doctor is Hataalii

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Lyla June: And the word for singer is also Hataalii because our doctors would memorize. We still do. These very, very long songs that takes sometimes days to sing.

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Lyla June: So all night. The Hataalii will sing songs for her and honor her and love her and celebrate her and prepare her for her life.

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Lyla June: And in the morning when the sun starts to rise in the east, she'll take off and run as far as she can. And then when she comes back her mother will catch her in a blanket and then one of her tasks is to cut that cake out of the ground now that it's baked, delicious called al'káán.

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Lyla June: And she will give it all away to her people. And she can't have a single bite. That's the rule.

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Lyla June: And so I tell you this story to talk about a form of eco-social technology, how the values that a society conveys to the next generation

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Lyla June: can be considered a technology. Think about it. What is a technology do? It supposedly assist humanity in the Art of Living, right? It's all about helping humanity.

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Lyla June: So social technology to me is any cultural artifact that assists humanity in the art of living. And so what are some of the social technologies that are expressed in this ceremony. Well, one of them is generosity, right, because they taught me when I was very young.

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Lyla June: That my womanhood was defined by my generosity, my, my ability to create this nourishment and share it with my people.

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Lyla June: Similarly, many of the manhood ceremonies, he will hunt a deer and he's not allowed to have a single bite and he'll share it with the whole community. So you see different iterations of these rites of passages ceremonies throughout

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Lyla June: What what we now call the United States.

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Lyla June: But we call it Turtle Island in case you didn't know, and all of these ceremonies are about instilling values and witnessing the manhood or womanhood.

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Lyla June: All the person. And I know that's very hetero normative. So I apologize. There are many spaces for various non binary expressions and yet there are support systems to support a healthy masculinity and healthy femininity.

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Lyla June: And so I believe this is a technology because they are honoring

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Lyla June: the menstruation, they're honoring women. I often call these types of societies matrifocal not matriarchal but matrifocal

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Lyla June: And when I was studying Anthropology at Stanford. I didn't hear them talking about this very much about the

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Lyla June: The sacredness of these teachings and about how these teachings weren't just primitive Indian stuff, but these were actually incredible technologies that allowed the culture to flourish. So feel free to ask me more questions. I might have

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Lyla June: excluded some contextual or background information that is making it hard to understand this, but I'm

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Lyla June: In our worlds and I gave a speech at MIT, the other day, back when we could fly around and give speeches and big auditoriums and I said the most simple thing in the world and they just thought it was fascinating. I said,

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Lyla June: Love is the greatest technology.

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Lyla June: Kindness is the greatest technology. Humility is the greatest technology.

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Lyla June: Because we can have all the PhDs in the world, all the rocket ships going to all the planets. But why is there still so much wealth disparity in our society.

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Lyla June: We can have so many scientific theories and principles and understand chemistry down to the proton

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Lyla June: But if we do not have love, then you get things like what we have today, where many of our populations do not have housing.

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Lyla June: Many of our we throw away half of our food each day.

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Lyla June: This is not an advanced society. This is actually a very primitive society because we don't honor the women.

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Lyla June: The women are not considered sacred. And so what happens when you don't consider the women sacred, when you don't celebrate her menstruation, when you don't celebrate her life giving abilities.

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Lyla June: Then life itself starts to unravel. And so that's why some of my elders had said, you know, we were actually we were and still are actually very advanced and sophisticated societies because we

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Lyla June: knew how things work. That's what they said we knew how things work. So even with America having all of these Apple watches and this and that. We're still

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Lyla June: sorely primitive in the fact that our water is not drinkable in 90% of the rivers in this continent.

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Lyla June: We can't drink the water like we used to always drink from the springs in the rivers and it was our source and and so these eco-social technologies, as I've said, are really important today because

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Lyla June: when the colonizers tried to destroy us. They weren't after our bodies. They were actually after our ideas because our ideas were antithetical to their project of slavery and genocide.

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Lyla June: Our ideas were about egalitarianism.

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Lyla June: Our ideas were about...

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Lyla June: There was no hierarchy. There was no male supremacy. There was no white supremacy. But, and as my friend Rupa Marya says there was no Human Supremacy

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Lyla June: This idea that humans are supreme above other life forms everything for us was a circle. Everything was in a circle. And so these may seem corny or cheesy or romanticize versions of indigenous philosophy. But if there's so

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Lyla June: If there's so cliché, then how can we still haven't figured it out yet.

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Lyla June: And how do we as Massart, as any organization. And I think you already are in many, many ways, or else I wouldn't be here right and

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Lyla June: The gallery wouldn't be asking me how they could be in more solidarity with the wampanoag and other local tribes. But how do various organizations come to actually live these principles and understand them and create them.

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Lyla June: And so I would humbly ask each of you to continue to

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Lyla June: Explore not only indigenous to this continent philosophy

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Lyla June: technologies, but also to see what ways you can work in your life to protect these systems because these systems are almost extinct.

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Lyla June: And I know right now there are 300,000 Diné people in my tribe. That's quite a bit. We're one of the largest tribes/nations.

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Lyla June: But we could be extinct in 200 years. We really could, because the American government has a rule where if you are any less than one fourth Navajo you're not allowed to be Navajo or Diné. Sorry, I use Navajo and Diné interchangeably.

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Lyla June: This is called blood quantum. This is the systematic eraser of a people because we marry other tribes and we, you know, I'm half Diné. My mother's diné, my father's from Texas, whatever that means I'm still figuring that out.

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Lyla June: But

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Lyla June: The point is that they are systematically

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Lyla June: erasing indigenous peoples from the official rosters

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Lyla June: And if you are, if you enroll in one tribe, such as the Diné. You're not allowed to enroll in another tribe, such as the Lakota you can only be in one so

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Lyla June: If my kids are half and their kids are half and their kids are half. But there are other tribes to it really doesn't matter. The only looking at one blood quantum

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Lyla June: So I think it is all of our duty today and every day to see ways in which we can stand behind Native Nations and protect

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Lyla June: first and foremost, their ideas and their communities, their children, their elders their languages, our languages are going extinct at a very rapid rate.

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Lyla June: Even though my nation has 300,000 people I'd say 90% of our fluent speakers are over the age of 40. The children are not learning

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Lyla June: And slowly. We're becoming anglicised. And so, um, I would ask each of you to think about ways in which you can join arms with us and protect our communities legally

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Lyla June: politically, environmentally, socially, and most of all, from the heart to be our relative such that we can protect the remaining ethnicities and the written remaining languages that still exist after a pretty brutal attempted genocide, um,

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Lyla June: So that's the social part, I have a few more minutes. So I'm going to get into the, the eco part

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Lyla June: And I know there's some of the sustainability minors in this

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Lyla June: conversation with all of us. I know that's a lot of. There's a lot of first year students

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Lyla June: And I'm just really grateful that you're all here. So maybe this will be relevant to the sustainability minors in particular, but hopefully to all of us. Because at the end of the day, we all breathe air we all drink water. We all need food.

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Lyla June: And that's what this piece of my talk is all about.

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Lyla June: So those social technologies. THE VALUE OF LOVE THE VALUE OF HUMILITY the value of respect seems so simple but yet.

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Lyla June: Look at our current situation in the United States. Those values aren't embodied by many of our leaders in fact the opposite is embodied, right? Like the value of selfishness, the value is the value of ego.

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Lyla June: The value of

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Lyla June: trickery and deceit. And so those are antithetical to what my ancestors stood for and fought for, because they also had collapse of their civilization and they learned from those collapses the hard way of what eco-social technologies will keep a society functioning for many, many generations.

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Lyla June: So I like to talk a little bit about

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Lyla June: Some of the ways in which native peoples manage the land. I'm a big nerd in this topic and I want to share with you what I've been learning lately.

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Lyla June: So one of the things is in Kentucky, we can drill very thin soil cores out of the ponds which people have done and analyze the fossilized pollen.

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Lyla June: And what you see is these soil cores are sometimes 10-20 feet deep and the pollen will fall on the surface of the pond and it will settle to the bottom and in the mud it will fossilize, and it does this over and over every year with the pollen rain.

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Lyla June: Until you have a very deep long record of the vegetation in the area. Some of this goes back 10,000 years. You can see what the forest composition was more or less.

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Lyla June: And so what we see in Kentucky is we see from about 10,000 years ago, up until about 3000 years ago, the whole forest was dominated with cedar and hemlock, then all of a sudden

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Lyla June: You see 3000 years ago this influx of chestnut, hickory nut,

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Lyla June: oak, sumpweed, goose foot, which are all edible plants and these edible plants were actually sustained by this nation. Who are the Shawnee the ancestors of the Shawnee

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Lyla June: And they also see an influx of fossilized charcoal, which indicates that these food forests that they created were managed with fire. And so what is burning due to the land. It seems scary, but it's actually can be incredibly beneficial to the soil to the health of the plants.

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Lyla June: And to the food forests that you've created burning transforms the forest floor from debris into bioavailable

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Lyla June: nitrogen the soil and the plants need. And the other thing burning does is it actually competing vegetation. So let's say

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Lyla June: A few chestnut trees, a few hickory nut trees, a few black walnut trees that the Shawnee ancestors, you know, created these orchards.

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Lyla June: And you have all of these different trees, trying to pop up there is limited nutrients, water and sunlight in the forest. And so if you have all these trees competing

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Lyla June: then even have a bunch of sick trees like we have in California, instead of a few strong, healthy trees. So that's one thing branding does no actually eliminate competing vegetation and one elder I spoke to said our role was 13 trees per acre.

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Lyla June: And you see that in a lot of

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Lyla June: Diaries of explorers who came to America, they say.

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Lyla June: Oh wow, it looks like a park. It looks like a manicured park you see over and over and over, they keep saying looks like a park because we manage this land so extensively that it was park like 13 trees per acre.

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Lyla June: And so the other thing that burning does is it, it helps create a loamy soil and this loam soil holds water.

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Lyla June: Very well. And so you're also affecting the hydrology of the soil which as we've seen in California and a very dried out soil creates a very dry it out forest, and then you get a tinderbox and it's no fun for anyone.

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Lyla June: And the other thing burning does is it creates nutrient dense grasslands in between the trees. And so who loves a nutrient dense grass

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Lyla June: But deer, wood bison and other herbivores. And so you literally creating habitat for your food to come to you. So that's a big misunderstanding in a lot of anthropology and different

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Lyla June: Archaeologists is we didn't chase the deer, chase the buffalo, chase the clams, chase the salmon know we were experts at generating habitat that the species loved

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Lyla June: And the species would come to us. And so it was almost like a fence without a fence, you know, you have your cattle you everyone's fenced in they're forced to stay there.

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Lyla June: We were more consensual, we would say, do y'all want to come over here. We've made a place for you. And they would say, yes, we sure do and then we would hunt them in an honorable and sacred way.

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Lyla June: Another example I like to share is the Hałtzaqv nation of

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Lyla June: British Columbia, Canada. So these guys are amazing to me. I was very lucky to visit their community, way up north. The island systems off the west coast of Canada.

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Lyla June: They are experts in planting, hand planting kelp forests along the shorelines. Now what does this do

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Lyla June: This increases the surface area for the herring fishes about this big, little silver fish to lay their eggs or lay their row.

00:29:30.030 --> 00:29:47.160

Lyla June: And so, what the Hałtzaqv took notice is that any surface will get completely covered in eggs. So they created more surface and this not only feeds them because they harvest that row and they eat it. It's a delicacy in Japan and other places.

00:29:49.080 --> 00:30:03.450

Lyla June: They also are eaten by the sea lions, the salmon, the killer whales, the Eagles, all the way up the food chain. Right? And so what happens is the Haíłzaqv people these indigenous eco sciences, I call them.

00:30:05.010 --> 00:30:12.900

Lyla June: Have single handedly generated enough food for the whole food system, the whole food web throughout the entire island system.

00:30:13.590 --> 00:30:22.800

Lyla June: They also had entire islands dedicated to bury habitat and they would burn. They would burn on this specific Island to create very habitat.

00:30:23.370 --> 00:30:33.000

Lyla June: And they're bringing those back today, their culture, their practices were interrupted, rather violently, but they are standing back up their beautiful people.

00:30:34.320 --> 00:30:55.770

Lyla June: And they're implementing these practices again. And so what I've noticed and other people have noted here and there is that there is a way for human beings to not only not hurt the earth, but to actually be a necessary component for the smooth functioning of certain biome systems.

00:30:56.970 --> 00:31:13.080

Lyla June: In other words, we have the ability to be a keystone species. Now, what is a keystone species, a keystone species is, um, any species that if you were to take them out of the equation, the system would fall apart.

00:31:14.010 --> 00:31:32.340

Lyla June: Um, more than other species would make the system fall apart if they went away. For example, Beaver, right? The beaver creates ponds and that creates a huge habitat all types of life forms thrive in these ponds and so when the beavers experienced genocide with the fur trade,

00:31:33.540 --> 00:31:43.500

Lyla June: they didn't just destroy the beavers, right? They destroyed everything that depended on those systems. Similarly with indigenous peoples WE WERE LIKE THE BEAVERS, we got wiped out.

00:31:44.010 --> 00:31:55.410

Lyla June: And when you take out indigenous peoples from the land, including the Wampanoag and various groups in Massachusetts, who are bringing back their clan beds beautiful work they're doing

00:31:56.100 --> 00:32:09.480

Lyla June: When you take these this this linchpin out of the system they be indigenous people and the culture, the eco-social technologies they carry, the system collapses. And this is what we see with the chestnut tree.

00:32:10.860 --> 00:32:24.270

Lyla June: As you may or may not know the American chestnut tree is going extinct. And this is due to mismanagement of chestnut forests. This was an incredibly important staple for indigenous nations in the east.

00:32:25.980 --> 00:32:27.960

Lyla June: So anyways, these are just different

00:32:29.670 --> 00:32:43.380

Lyla June: examples that I found along the way. The last one I'll talk about and I think we're running out of time. I love to get to questions because I know I've been talking a long time. Um, is there a Menominee. The Menominee are in Wisconsin.

00:32:44.550 --> 00:32:49.770

Lyla June: Again, beautiful people. I've never gone to a native community and not just been completely

00:32:50.910 --> 00:33:04.980

Lyla June: dumbstruck by the gentleness, the, the, the generosity, the kindness. We might have issues, right, we have, you know, diabetes, because our traditional food systems were

00:33:05.580 --> 00:33:16.500

Lyla June: for the most part, destroyed. We might have alcoholism, which they used to import alcohol by the barrel. And we went through a genocide. So sometimes when you go through genocide, a drink sounds kind of nice.

00:33:17.880 --> 00:33:24.210

Lyla June: We have these issues we have poverty, of course, because we've been stripped of all of our political power again and again and again.

00:33:25.590 --> 00:33:38.700

Lyla June: But what I have found is that these issues are not from us. They are not our problems. They are the outgrowth of the abuse that was inflicted on us. So when I look past those things.

00:33:39.690 --> 00:33:53.430

Lyla June: Oh, and the casinos that the loan sharks push on us and then we end up with this huge debt and we don't, we're not all rich off casinos big misconception. We're actually in debt because of casinos more often than not.

00:33:54.450 --> 00:34:10.980

Lyla June: But anyways, I see the most gentle beauty and so the Menominee have a very defined reservation. It's a big rectangle in Wisconsin. They were put there because they were taken out of their coastal homeland near the Great Lakes.

00:34:12.090 --> 00:34:28.560



Lyla June: And they started a timber company, a logging company. Now this one's fascinating because these guys have been logging this little rectangle for over 100 years and the biomass of the forest has actually increased

00:34:29.700 --> 00:34:36.180

Lyla June: They are incredible. They've won international awards for their forestry technologies. I'll call them.

00:34:36.570 --> 00:34:47.820

Lyla June: For their forestry practices. And this is done with a really simple idea you use rotating harvest. So they have this rectangle and they divide the rectangle into many different parcels.

00:34:48.570 --> 00:34:57.210

Lyla June: And each parcel is harvested every five years, right? So they'll harvest and they'll leave it alone for five years and they'll go to other parcels.

00:34:57.840 --> 00:35:09.810

Lyla June: And what they do is they take the smallest and youngest trees, leaving the old growth, right. That's exactly opposite of American timber companies. They want the big old redwoods chop them down and send them off.

00:35:11.460 --> 00:35:28.140

Lyla June: So, the Menominee take care of their old growth system and have plenty of timber, which they then sell as a tribal enterprise, the Menominee tribal enterprises. So they are a good examples of how certain economies can be completely sustainable and sensitive to the

00:35:29.160 --> 00:35:38.640

Lyla June: To the world around them. And so if you haven't noticed by now, one of my ulterior motives in sharing all of this with you is to debunk

00:35:38.970 --> 00:35:48.960

Lyla June: the mythology that indigenous peoples are primitive, stupid, backward all the things my grandparents were called their entire upbringing.

00:35:49.860 --> 00:36:00.660

Lyla June: And many of them believe that, you know, and now they're ashamed to be native but we actually were incredibly sophisticated advanced societies that were eco-

00:36:01.230 --> 00:36:13.260

Lyla June: social technologists. And again, all of these practices all of these ecological practices from the burning, to the kelp forests, to the rotating harvest

00:36:13.590 --> 00:36:23.760

Lyla June: Remember, underlying that is our social technologies. Our love, our respect, our humility. Because when a human has humility. They're saying

00:36:24.150 --> 00:36:41.820

Lyla June: "maybe I am not the center of the universe, maybe other species and their health matters as much as mine." And for that reason, indigenous peoples today now oversee 80%, 80% of the world's biodiversity.

00:36:42.450 --> 00:36:59.010

Lyla June: Even though we only hold tenure over 20% of the world's land. So let that sink in a little bit and then we'll talk again about whether or not indigenous peoples are primitive or perhaps quite sophisticated. So I'll stop there. Thank you all for listening.

00:37:00.480 --> 00:37:02.640

Lyla June: And we'd love to open it up for questions.

00:37:04.950 --> 00:37:10.860

Lyssa Paluay: Thank you Lyla. Yes, you have the ability to unmute yourself so

00:37:12.120 --> 00:37:17.370

Lyssa Paluay: If you would like to have a comment or a question. Go ahead and jump right in.

00:37:38.970 --> 00:37:43.020

Lyssa Paluay: Carolyn, I think you're still not unmuted. Can you

00:37:49.650 --> 00:37:55.470

Lyla June: Also comments are very welcome to. If you don't have a question or just something you want to share, you're welcome to

00:37:59.910 --> 00:38:08.370

Lyla June: Let me see if I can unmute Carolyn. Oh, I know why we didn't let them know. Okay, I think I can unmute Carolyn.

00:38:11.130 --> 00:38:14.010

Lyla June: Oh no, she's already unmuted. I don't know why.

00:38:21.420 --> 00:38:28.590

Lyssa Paluay: Well, I guess I'd like to ask my question. You got it. Yeah. Okay, go ahead.

00:38:28.890 --> 00:38:33.330

Lyla June: Um, are there any artists, you are particularly inspired by

00:38:36.300 --> 00:38:40.920

Lyla June: So I'm a musician myself. My computer is actually on my piano right now.

00:38:41.940 --> 00:38:46.590

Lyla June: But I play guitar. This is my little studio been recording some stuff.

00:38:48.390 --> 00:38:49.770

Lyla June: So I love music

00:38:51.540 --> 00:38:52.860

Lyla June: And I would say

00:38:54.870 --> 00:38:58.170

Lyla June: I usually listen to like spiritual music

00:38:59.520 --> 00:39:09.060

Lyla June: Like, but I like techno so like spiritual techno, um, for better or worse, and but like a MC Yogi. He's a

00:39:13.110 --> 00:39:22.980

Lyla June: A white man who studied a lot of Hindu culture and then put it into techno and, you know, and I think that could definitely be

00:39:23.910 --> 00:39:38.700

Lyla June: Labeled cultural appropriation. Yeah, I do very much appreciate the way he conveys again, the ideas, the social technologies that the fabric of our value system that then gives rise to different practices.

00:39:40.020 --> 00:39:48.900

Lyla June: In terms of visual artists, you know, I, I'm never been that much of a painter. I'm good at many things, but I'm not good at painting.

00:39:49.980 --> 00:39:56.070

Lyla June: Um, but I really like a graphic designer by the name of Jordan Brien.

00:39:56.730 --> 00:40:10.020

Lyla June: And he's from the Ojibwe tribe and he's been doing really wonderful graphics that are more political in nature and he's been getting a lot of our ideas as indigenous peoples who are fighting for our sovereignty

00:40:10.440 --> 00:40:21.030

Lyla June: out into the world in ways that are gorgeous, in ways that are catchy, and in ways that I would dare say are trendy so that people can start to digest those ideas.

00:40:21.840 --> 00:40:29.160

Lyla June: Because we have a lot to say as indigenous peoples, but I don't think we've learned how to say, effectively, and we're getting better and better at that all the time.

00:40:36.660 --> 00:40:47.520

Lyla June: Um, so there's another question. It says, Are there research institutes or publications, which you recommend for study. Um, yes. Um,

00:40:48.600 --> 00:40:51.510

Lyla June: There's a really burgeoning

00:40:52.590 --> 00:40:55.380

Lyla June: Community of indigenous scholars, um,

00:40:56.610 --> 00:41:09.300

Lyla June: There's a whole university at New Zealand In New Zealand. That is all run by Maori people I'm blanking on the name, but I'll get it in a second. I'll put it in the chat. I think it's called Te Whare Wānanga o Awanuiārangi:

<https://www.wananga.ac.nz/>

00:41:10.050 --> 00:41:30.240

Lyla June: I'll get it. Um, and this indigenous university is actually offers nursing degrees in Maori nursing. So they blend Western nursing with Maori styles of healing, which I think is brilliant. Um, there's also

00:41:31.590 --> 00:41:46.950

Lyla June: United Nations Technical College in North Dakota, which is a big university for Native Americans, by and large, however, I think you can go even if you're not Native American, and they have all indigenous professors who teach about food sovereignty.

00:41:48.120 --> 00:42:05.220

Lyla June: Of course, history, art, everything. There's also the Institute of American Indian Arts in Santa Fe, where I'm from, just north of Santa Fe, New Mexico, and they've been, you know, producing incredible indigenous artists for decades now.

00:42:07.050 --> 00:42:12.750

Lyla June: And in terms of publications. I mean, don't even get me started. I have a whole

00:42:14.700 --> 00:42:19.260

Lyla June: library. But let me show you one book that I think is particularly compelling.

00:42:27.510 --> 00:42:33.480

Lyla June: This book is called a you can't, it's might be backwards but it's called "Original Instructions

00:42:34.800 --> 00:42:37.830

Lyla June: Indigenous Teachings for a Sustainable Future."

00:42:39.300 --> 00:42:42.090

Lyla June: And it's edited by one of my PhD.

00:42:43.620 --> 00:42:52.170

Lyla June: Committee Chairs, committee members, Melissa Nelson, who is a from the Turtle Mountain Chippewa nation.

00:42:54.480 --> 00:43:03.990

Lyla June: And it's, it's what I like about this book is it's many, many different indigenous voices in one book. It's, it's, edited by her, but it has probably

00:43:05.040 --> 00:43:08.880

Lyla June: 30 different chapters from 30 different native authors.

00:43:10.740 --> 00:43:20.340

Lyla June: In terms of art, you know, I'm trying to think of. There's so many indigenous artists. Right now I'm coming out with incredible things

00:43:21.300 --> 00:43:31.140

Lyla June: Most of them are all like Instagram. Yeah, like the up and coming artists really showing their stuff on Instagram. Um, but yeah. I hope that helps answer your question a little bit

00:43:39.930 --> 00:43:57.660

Lyssa Paluay: Lyla, I think I would love to hear. And this was the phrase, and you've said it but that we talked about a few weeks ago, this idea of humility as technology. And I think you've given us some really

00:43:58.770 --> 00:44:06.960

Lyssa Paluay: great examples of how that looks like in land management, but can you just speak a little bit more about that idea.

00:44:08.850 --> 00:44:10.320

Lyla June: Yes, um,

00:44:13.410 --> 00:44:15.150

Lyla June: Human beings.

00:44:16.170 --> 00:44:17.010

Lyla June: Have

00:44:18.900 --> 00:44:21.930

Lyla June: learned the hard way how to live on Earth.

00:44:23.220 --> 00:44:23.790

Lyla June: And

00:44:25.170 --> 00:44:49.500

Lyla June: It's not just in Native American societies, but all throughout the world. We have learned the hard way the, the importance of humility. And so humility is perhaps the most important technology that we have, because it allows us to act selflessly and it allows us to think holistically.

00:44:50.640 --> 00:44:57.330

Lyla June: As opposed to egotistically and humility something I'm still working on

00:44:58.830 --> 00:45:14.760

Lyla June: Allows us to live our happiest life because we are not concerned with the self, but rather we are concerned with the community, which includes the self, but is not the self in a vacuum.

00:45:16.350 --> 00:45:19.170

Lyla June: And humility can be

00:45:20.790 --> 00:45:23.820

Lyla June: Hard for Americans, because we

00:45:24.990 --> 00:45:43.260

Lyla June: We weren't taught humility. We were taught the opposite, who can get the highest grade. Who can be the homecoming queen. I mean, the fact that we have this thing called a homecoming queen and we're teaching young children about monarchy.

00:45:44.850 --> 00:45:52.230

Lyla June: And hierarchy. At such a young precious pubescent time of their life.

00:45:53.430 --> 00:45:55.350

Lyla June: Really makes me sad.

00:45:56.670 --> 00:46:03.450

Lyla June: And we are essentially robbing these young people have a happy life.

00:46:05.640 --> 00:46:12.600

Lyla June: They'll never know what it means to value the person who gives the most away.

00:46:12.720 --> 00:46:21.360

Lyla June: To value, the person who takes care of the elders in the neighborhood to value the person who takes care of the mothers.

00:46:22.710 --> 00:46:27.000

Lyla June: To value the, the young men who are learning what it means to be young men.

00:46:28.500 --> 00:46:46.770

Lyla June: They'll never know the joy that many of our societies found when we used to have a competition, you know, we didn't have profit maximization, which is the current competition that most of American lives by

00:46:48.570 --> 00:46:59.730

Lyla June: We had this competition of, like, who could be the most humble who could be the most gentle, I swear. This is a real company like a friendly competition, of course, but it really was.

00:47:00.270 --> 00:47:18.090

Lyla June: The general attitude that permeated our culture's such that selfishness and in the old societies, many of them was considered a mental illness. And so it's just, it's very different and so

00:47:19.110 --> 00:47:37.710

Lyla June: It's fun. I think it's fun to be a warrior. And I think that's what I'm asking all of you today is would you be open to being a warrior for creator today. Would you be open to being a warrior for the for the water today. Would you be open to being a warrior for

00:47:38.880 --> 00:47:42.090

Lyla June: not just indigenous peoples. But anyone who

00:47:43.140 --> 00:47:45.300

Lyla June: is disproportionately

00:47:46.860 --> 00:47:55.200

Lyla June: treated or mistreated based on their origin, which would you be willing to be a warrior for the people.

00:47:55.890 --> 00:48:12.150

Lyla June: And those of us who step into that role as warriors, which I should say is what saved my life. I used to be a drug addict. Actually, I started doing drugs when I was 11 which is common for many Native Nations because we've been so saturated

00:48:13.590 --> 00:48:30.660

Lyla June: But it wasn't until my society said, "hey, we need you to be our warrior" that I could finally put those drugs down and say, you know what I want to be a warrior and I'm a warrior whose weapons are truth and faith, and love, you know, it's the only ones we were allowed to fight.

00:48:31.830 --> 00:48:36.660

Lyla June: In the old days, sometimes we had to defend ourselves but that wasn't our first

00:48:38.340 --> 00:48:53.190

Lyla June: preference. So anyways, I think that these competitions is friendly competitions are what create a sustainable society, America is only 300 years old.

00:48:54.210 --> 00:49:01.950

Lyla June: Or not even 300 years old and it's about to collapse politically, ideologically, hydrological, our food systems,

00:49:03.750 --> 00:49:11.280

Lyla June: our ecosystems. All of these things are on the brink of collapse. And so the Shawnee in Kentucky that

00:49:11.970 --> 00:49:26.490

Lyla June: fossilized pollen record, they stained that black walnut forest. We can tell for 3000 years they it just kept going. And so when we have the technology of humility. We can create those types of societies.

00:49:29.550 --> 00:49:31.320

Lyla June: So I'm

00:49:32.730 --> 00:49:41.820

Lyla June: What do you think I would love to hear from you all. There are two questions in the chat. But I feel like I've been blabbing so long. I'd love to just hear a reaction or you know what you

00:49:42.150 --> 00:49:43.800

Lyla June: How you felt with all this

00:49:44.070 --> 00:49:46.680

Lyla June: How did it land with you what

00:49:47.790 --> 00:49:50.100

Lyla June: What did you feel, what did you think

00:49:51.600 --> 00:49:52.410

Lyla June: If you'd like

00:49:56.160 --> 00:50:08.520

Finnian Ramirez-Montanez (he/him): And can you hear me? Um, I feel like the sponge has only begun to be filled, if that makes any sense like you kind of

00:50:08.940 --> 00:50:20.910

Finnian Ramirez-Montanez (he/him): There's so much knowledge that isn't known or that frankly isn't taught in Western civilization, you know, Western society or whatever. Um, and just hearing this little bit

00:50:22.020 --> 00:50:30.120

Finnian Ramirez-Montanez (he/him): It's just like you want more, if that makes any sense because it's incredible information and, you know,

00:50:31.260 --> 00:50:41.610

Finnian Ramirez-Montanez (he/him): How much we could actually learn from this if we took the time to do so and properly honor it. And what we're not doing now, so

00:50:45.930 --> 00:50:46.890

Lyla June: I agree and

00:50:47.940 --> 00:50:57.990

Lyla June: It's the way I think of it is if the US government worked this hard to destroy all of this knowledge. I'm sharing, then maybe there's something to it.



00:50:58.920 --> 00:51:09.720

Lyla June: That we might have antidotes to hierarchy, we might have antidotes to slavery. We might have antidotes to environmental collapse. We have antidotes to capitalism.

00:51:11.040 --> 00:51:12.960

Lyla June: Or maybe not antidotes, but alternatives.

00:51:14.490 --> 00:51:22.200

Lyla June: And so I think you're right. And I think if you want to continue learning, um,

00:51:23.250 --> 00:51:31.350

Lyla June: that I think that's what our role is now as indigenous peoples is the world is ready to hear, obviously, or we wouldn't be here.

00:51:32.070 --> 00:51:50.070

Lyla June: Now it's on upon us to get this knowledge ready to share and get it packaged in a way that people who are not from our communities can actually grasp it, and contextualize this stuff to help people truly understand

00:51:51.750 --> 00:51:58.410

Lyla June: But I think the biggest thing you can do. Today, I'm going to put this in the chat.

00:52:00.030 --> 00:52:01.530

Lyla June: It's a little website.

00:52:02.940 --> 00:52:06.990

Lyla June: That you can. Oh, sorry I did it wrong.

00:52:09.180 --> 00:52:21.810

Lyla June: You can see where whose land your whose homeland, you're standing on and what I always say to people is go to the local nation and say, how can I help, if at all?

00:52:22.500 --> 00:52:39.240

Lyla June: And that is a powerful statement because you are allowing the community to determine how you will help instead of coming with a pre packaged usually Western idea of how to help and you're giving that community agency which we've never had. I mean,

00:52:41.280 --> 00:52:55.380

Lyla June: 8000 of my people were put in a concentration camp that Hitler would later study right there in New Mexico, so we don't, we're not really used to people saying, "What do you want?" we're used to people saying "go in the concentration camp don't come out until we say."

00:52:57.180 --> 00:53:10.770

Lyla June: So you're giving that community agency and you're also saying, if at all, you know, how, how may I help if at all, you know, here's my skill set. Here's what I'm good at and you'll, you'll be interested to see the ways in which these communities guide you

00:53:12.360 --> 00:53:23.520

Lyla June: And I think that's a good way to sort of start the relationship and start to learn not just through Google and Wikipedia, which often is inaccurate information, but on the ground in the native communities.

00:53:25.980 --> 00:53:38.850

Lyla June: So I know we're coming up on time here. I can keep going if people want to stay. I'm also happy to end the the talk. Now I do see some outstanding questions in the chat. I want to apologize for not

00:53:40.560 --> 00:53:42.570

Lyla June: Being able to get to them. What do you think

00:53:43.740 --> 00:53:44.190

Lyssa Paluay: Um,

00:53:45.630 --> 00:53:59.760

Lyssa Paluay: Well you know I was just noticing a question in the chat and and it was Finn's question about, I think, Finn and please jump in here because I thought it was a really interesting question

00:54:01.200 --> 00:54:04.140

Lyssa Paluay: What did you say Finn? kind of Western

00:54:04.140 --> 00:54:05.670

Lyssa Paluay: technology that

00:54:05.760 --> 00:54:20.010

Lyla June: Go with it. Yes. So is there any Western technologies that have the capability to coexist with indigenous technologies? Um. Well, one answer that comes to mind really quickly is

00:54:22.440 --> 00:54:26.310

Lyla June: Scientific, how would you say that

00:54:27.690 --> 00:54:34.890

Lyla June: Measuring measurement technologies, like for instance, I would have never been able to discuss this.

00:54:34.950 --> 00:54:36.630

Lyla June: Shawnee food forest and

00:54:36.630 --> 00:54:41.160

Lyla June: Kentucky. If I didn't have the tool of radiocarbon dating.

00:54:43.230 --> 00:54:53.550

Lyla June: And the way of analyzing macro fossils dating them the way of identifying pollen and spores and associating them with the right species.

00:54:54.720 --> 00:55:08.460

Lyla June: The way of identifying fossilized charcoal within a sample of sediment. So I would say science is actually it has been the enemy of indigenous peoples because of its racist underpinnings

00:55:10.080 --> 00:55:17.460

Lyla June: But it could be a great friend to indigenous peoples, for instance, we've been trying to tell people for aeons that

00:55:17.970 --> 00:55:30.360

Lyla June: We have been on this continent for much longer than the Bering Strait theory says, and we've been trying to help people understand why the Bering Strait theory is actually

00:55:31.050 --> 00:55:41.520

Lyla June: an outgrowth of white supremacist ideology about why it diminishing the duration of our time here saying, We've only been here 14,000 years

00:55:42.660 --> 00:55:52.410

Lyla June: Um, it makes it to where Native people don't matter as much because they're not really from here. They're from Asia, so it's okay if we kill them all. You know, it's okay that we killed them all.

00:55:53.880 --> 00:55:58.320

Lyla June: But we've actually been saying for a long time. We've been here, hundreds of thousands of years.

00:55:58.620 --> 00:56:15.750

Lyla June: And now that evidence is coming in, right? and the scientific community is really resistant to this data. They want to pretend like it's not real data. They try to discredit it because it's causing such a paradigm shift in the scientific world. So that's one thing.

00:56:16.950 --> 00:56:24.780

Lyla June: The scientific technologies that exist, which are the only thing most white people listen to

00:56:25.260 --> 00:56:38.460

Lyla June: They don't listen to our creation story. They won't listen to. But if you give them a radiocarbon date. They're like, oh yeah. Okay. That makes sense. Um, you know those things can be really coexisting with native technologies, very, very well.

00:56:42.960 --> 00:56:43.770

Finnian Ramirez-Montanez (he/him): Thank you Lyla.

00:56:44.190 --> 00:56:46.380

Lyla June: Yeah, there's more. I could say on that. But I want to be.

00:56:49.200 --> 00:56:50.280

Lyla June: Terse if I can

00:56:52.230 --> 00:56:53.940

Lyssa Paluay: All right, well, if

00:56:55.110 --> 00:57:04.380

Lyssa Paluay: There any other questions or comments. There's a lot of gratefulness in the chat Lyla. Thank you.

00:57:05.490 --> 00:57:08.280

Lyssa Paluay: We could keep going. I know.

00:57:10.470 --> 00:57:31.950

Lyssa Paluay: But I just wanted to say thank you and I want to, if I can somehow promise that when we are safely able to invite you to campus. I'd like we'd like to do that and see you in person, because this has really been generous and I think we could have a lot more to talk about. So

00:57:33.960 --> 00:57:35.010

Lyssa Paluay: Thank you Lyla.

00:57:35.790 --> 00:57:36.570

Lyssa Paluay: Thank you.

00:57:38.640 --> 00:57:56.220

Lyla June: Thank all of you so much for having me and I love your campus. I love you. The JET office, and I love what you all are doing with Massart. I think it's very, very powerful. And so much potential to to help create these bridges and heal, heal our Mother Earth. So thank you all.

00:57:58.020 --> 00:57:58.620

Lyla June: Thanks.

00:57:58.890 --> 00:58:00.510

Lyssa Paluay: Have a great evening, everyone.