

January 19, 2018

Dear Dr. Rosita Kaaháni Worl,

We received your message regarding our 24th Annual Alaska Retreat and wanted to acknowledge your concern and provide clarity on a few key aspects of the program.

Firstly, we apologize for not reaching out to you proactively and hope that we are able to mend our relationship with the native people of the area and with you personally, as a representative of your community. We are sincerely sorry for any unintentional feelings of disrespect which we have created. We hold the deepest respect for not only the Huichol tribe, with which we are closely connected, but to all native peoples around the globe, who selflessly continue to be stewards of the Earth and protect the land that supports us all.

Though there are indeed many who have misappropriated indigenous cultures around the globe, we strongly believe that Brant Secunda is no such individual. Instead, he underwent an arduous twelve-year apprenticeship and traditional training with the revered Huichol Shaman Don José Matsuwa and has maintained the wholehearted support of the Huichol people since completing his apprenticeship. Following this training, Don José sent Brant back into the modern world to share the wisdom he gained from the tribe. Don José accompanied Brant over fifteen times to the United States and Europe, to announce publicly that he was leaving Brant in his place to carry on the way of the Huichol.

Today, the Huichol elders continue to support Brant and the work of the Dance of the Deer Foundation. We maintain constant contact with tribal leaders throughout the Sierra Madre region of Mexico and follow their guidance in all that we do.

The Huichol are aware of the costs of our programs and the way in which these events help to sustain our longstanding educational and cultural support initiatives within various villages. The cost of this particular program correlates to the cost of putting on such an event, which includes comfortable accommodations and gourmet meals in an area where costs are high for such amenities. We have made very little profit on this program over the last number of years, and some years it is even a money-losing

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proposition. Still, we return year after year to Alaska to connect with and honor the spiritual energy of the mountains, glaciers, sea, and boundless wildlife.

We have come to Alaska for over 24 years to honor the sacred land and offer our energy in support of Mother Earth. We hope that you will support us in continuing to honor the power of your beautiful homeland and we want to do whatever we can to support and respect the indigenous peoples of the region.

Thank you for all that you do to sustain the cultural preservation of Aak'w Kwáan, and we hope that we are able to foster a positive connection in order to support the continued empowerment of the Earth and the original stewards of this great land.

With deepest respect,

Management Team

Dance of the Deer Foundation

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