

UMS Welcomes Detroit-Based Multidisciplinary Artist & Music Producer Sacramento Knox as 2020-21 UMS Research Residency Artist

Residency Kicks Off with Winter Solstice Interactive Digital Event

Monday, December 21 at 5:30 pm

ANN ARBOR, MI (Thursday, December 10, 2020) – The **University Musical Society** (UMS) is pleased to welcome Ojibwe/Anishinaabe and Xicano multidisciplinary artist and music producer **Sacramento Knox** as the 2020-21 UMS Education and Community Engagement Research Residency Artist. This research residency program, funded in part by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, seeks to bring performing artists whose work engages with issues of social justice, public practice, or intercultural understanding to the University of Michigan (U-M) campus.

With strong roots in Southwest Detroit, Sacramento Knox is a founding member of the Aadizookaan — a dynamic collective of creatives who, guided by ancestral indigenous-based knowledge systems, tell uplifting cultural stories through multidisciplinary art and music. Knox's versatile background blends traditional and contemporary styles to create dynamic storytelling experiences that use live music, dance, and video projection to take audiences on a participatory, creative journey. He shares interactive music performances that blend captured moments in life and creative imagery through large projection motion graphics. Building from raw experience and grit, his works are reflective of the worlds in which we want to live.

“We are so thrilled to be working with Sacramento Knox this season,” said Cayenne Harris, UMS vice president of Education & Community Engagement. “We’re grateful that, despite the challenges of living through a pandemic, we’re still able to find ways to engage with and learn from this remarkable artist whose work is rooted in a deep knowledge and understanding of indigenous teachings. The traditions he employs help point us toward ways that we can live outside our current culture of extraction and exploitation, and we can’t wait to share his work with our community at the University of Michigan, in Southeast Michigan, and beyond.”

Knox will base his residency's work on Anishinaabe teachings to explore themes of environmental justice, exploitation, and the connection between the spirit and the land. The cycles of the moon and the changing of the seasons will serve as the grounding timeline for the residency, which will feature three public-facing events, the first of which will take place online the evening of the winter solstice on **Monday, December 21 at 5:30 pm. Details are listed below.**

"The winter solstice is a ceremony time and is seen as the final day to take care of one another; it's the moment where the poles shift," said Knox. "I wanted to share these Anishinaabe teachings during this phase of winter, as that's traditionally when a lot of stories are told. It's in alignment with Anishinaabe culture's ways and lifestyle, and it feels amazing to share that with others.

"Sometimes when you're in the studio by yourself, the magic stays there," Knox continued. "So, with this residency, I look forward to creating the magic in the music, having the opportunity to share the entire process, and uncovering gems for everyone to enjoy."

PUBLIC DIGITAL EVENT:

Manidoo-Giizisoons (Little Spirit Moon)

Monday, December 21 at 5:30 pm (online)

Register now at ums.org

The winter solstice marks the first public event of the residency, where audiences will gather online to reflect on the changing seasons through collective music-making. Audiences will be guided through a series of original songs and videos, paired with traditional Anishinaabe teachings. The performance will conclude with the creation of a live-produced track where individual audience members will be invited to contribute via their computer microphones. Participants must register in advance at ums.org.

[Learn More: Knox \(Interview/Audio/Video\)](#)

[Learn More/Register: *Manidoo-Giizisoons*](#)

[Press Photos](#)

ABOUT UMS

A recipient of the 2014 National Medal of Arts, UMS (also known as the University Musical Society) contributes to a vibrant cultural community by connecting audiences with performing artists from around the world in uncommon and engaging experiences. One of the oldest performing arts presenters

in the country, UMS is an independent non-profit organization affiliated with the University of Michigan. During the coronavirus pandemic, UMS has continued to connect audiences and artists through digital presentations, educational events, and a robust Digital Artist Residency series, giving audiences a window into the creative process through six different projects by Wendell Pierce, Tarek Yamani and the Spektral Quartet, Tunde Olaniran, Cleo Parker Robinson, Brian Lobel and Gweneth Ann Rand, and Joyce DiDonato. All digital presentations are being presented free-of-charge to enable access to audiences everywhere, supporting UMS's commitment to bold artistic leadership, engaged learning through the arts, and access and inclusiveness. Matthew VanBesien became the organization's seventh president in July 2017.