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Advanced mathematics, astronomy, architecture, and art were developed here, independently from the rest of the world. While humanoid figures depicted in ancient and contemporary Native art may appear otherworldly to western eyes, they are the manifestations of indigenous minds without physical outside influence.

To say that "It has to be aliens!" is to disregard the intelligence, imagination, and creative ability of the indigenous people of the North and South American continents.

~Manuel Lucero, Cherokee

The Cherokee word Ani~Noquisi means "Star Nation" or "Star People." In this special exhibit, we celebrate the dual meaning. Offered is a view of indigenous ways from a new perspective.

Myth~Busting

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Night Sky

An endless blanket of glistening lights suspended in unfathomably deep velvety darkness— that is what the people gaze into. Wonderment abounds. Fascination with the cosmos influences art, stories, and traditions.

Tales passed down through oral tradition explain the nation of stars, how the lights came to be and where they are leading. The stories carry messages of morality, teaching ethics over the generations.

Mary Golda Ross, Cherokee, was the first Native American aerospace engineer. She helped write the NASA Planetary Flight Handbook and made concepts for flight missions to Mars and Venus. Many follow her path, studying space and adventuring as far as technology will allow.

In the NameExoWorlds 2022 contest, the International Astronomical Union asked teams globally to choose indigenous names for 20 exoworlds. Among the winners was one U.S.A. team, the team from Prescott. Manuel Lucero from MIP was on the team and suggested the names which were chosen.

Aaron Yazzie, Diné, is one of the Native Americans working on the Mars project. He helped develop the drill on the Perseverance Rover, which is collecting samples from the Jezero Crater in the Syrtis Quadrangle on Mars. Currently there are four Diné of the 21 Native Americans working for NASA.

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Science Fiction

Sci-Fi movies appeal to many indigenous people for their plot lines. Star Wars has a particular attraction. The villains are a powerful force set on invading the homes of autonomous beings for conquest, terror, and robbing natural resources. But the beings are anything but simple. They have something special on their side, a force. They nurture it and band together in rebellion against the evil empire. The plot resonates for its parallelism to colonization and rebellion.

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