

RYAN LEE

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Martine Gutierrez

Indigenous Woman

September 6 – October 20, 2018

Reception: Thursday, September 6, 6–8PM

Letter From The Editor:

This is not a magazine about fashion, lifestyle, or celebrity. *Indigenous Woman* is an independent art publication dedicated to the celebration of Mayan Indian heritage, the navigation of contemporary indigeneity, and the ever-evolving self-image. It is a vision, an overture, a provocation.

The word “indigenous” here is used to refer to native cultures from a particular region, but also as a synonym for the natural and innate. It signifies a real, authentic, native-born woman. There was a time when I believed there was no such title for me to claim. I was driven to question how identity is formed, expressed, valued, and weighed as a woman, as a transwoman, as a latinx woman, as a woman of indigenous descent, as a femme artist and maker? It is nearly impossible to arrive at any finite answers, but for me, this process of exploration is exquisitely life-affirming.

In working to convey my own fluid identity—an identity that brides the binaries of gender and ethnicity—I aim in part to subvert cis, white, Western standards of beauty and raise questions about inclusivity, appropriation, and consumerism. From behind long lashes and lacquered lips, I use the fashion magazine’s glossy framework to play with perception. I employ mannequins, advertorials, and indigenous textiles to reassert control over my own image. Mine is a practice of full autonomy—all photography, modeling, styling, makeup, hair, lighting, graphic design, and product design I have executed myself.

Indigenous Woman marries the traditional to the contemporary, the native to the post-colonial, and the marginalized to the mainstream in the pursuit of genuine selfhood, revealing cultural inequities along the way. This is a quest for identity. Of my own specifically, yes, but by digging my pretty, painted nails deeply into the dirt of my own image I am also probing the depths for some understanding of identity as a social construction.

It is also my ambition to forge a connection between the art world and my community. While it is my desire for *Indigenous Woman* to provide some sustenance for my fellow millennial non-binary transwomen of color, I sincerely hope that all audiences will find the work compelling and captivating. I believe it is possible to create an empathetic and supportive society, but it requires that we all educate ourselves, that we learn to be allies and activists who understand our own privilege. Mutual understanding has the power to change the world.

Editor-in-Chief
Martine Gutierrez

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Martine Gutierrez (b. 1989 Berkeley, CA) received her BFA from the Rhode Island School of Design in 2012. She draws from eclectic media, acting as subject, artist and muse. Through performance, photography and film, Gutierrez documents her personal transformations by embodying various imagined personas. Gutierrez has been included in exhibitions at Arnot Art Museum, Elmira, NY; Lowe Gallery at Hofstra University, Hempstead, NY; MOCA GA, Atlanta, GA; and Vincent Price Art Museum, Monterey Park, CA. Recent solo exhibitions include Martine Gutierrez: *True Story* at Boston University Art Gallery and *WE & THEM & ME* at Contemporary Art Museum Raleigh in North Carolina.

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