

By email

Thomas Denenberg
Director, Shelburne Museum
6000, Shelburne Road
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Shelburne, VT 05482
director@shelburnemuseum.org

Subject: Meeting request regarding Perry Center for Native American Art

Dear Mr. Denenberg,

We represent the Abenaki People, now confined in the two small reserves of Odanak and W8linak, in the Province of Quebec. We have never ceded our ancestral territory in New England, nor have we ceased to utilize the larger territory. We have also long denounced Vermont's state-recognized 'Abenaki tribes' as Pretendians, including in April of 2022 at the University of Vermont¹.

We noticed that the Shelburne Museum, seeking to build the Perry Center for Native American Art, is now collaborating with what it calls "regional and national Indigenous culture bearers". The people you have collaborated with so far, are White People playing Indian. None have any proof of Abenaki ancestry or any historic link to a North American Indian tribe. This has been proven by several independent genealogical investigations done on many individuals of these groups.

As Professor Kim Tallbear made clear in a presentation at the University of Vermont last month, such race-shifters carry out a final and genocidal act of colonization by erasing and replacing actual Native People with the voices and the bodies of the invader.

We ask you to think about your actions and to put a stop to such collaboration. If it is your intent to work with those who have preserved the culture and language of the Abenaki across 400 years of colonization, we are those people, and we are the sole guardians of that heritage.

We want to be clear that the promotion of Indigenous and Abenaki cultures is an initiative that we fully support. But it must be done properly. We are at your disposal to help you do it.

¹ Vermont Public, "Odanak First Nation denounces Vt. State-recognized tribes as 'pretendians', May 5, 2022, <https://www.vermontpublic.org/local-news/2022-05-05/odanak-first-nation-denounces-vt-state-recognized-tribes-as-pretendian>

In this sense, we would like to meet you as soon as possible to address our concerns about the cultural appropriation and fraud made by these four “tribes”. We could also discuss the possibilities in helping you set up the Perry Center for Native American Art in a way that includes real Indigenous People of Vermont.

To coordinate that meeting, please contact:

Mr Daniel G. Nolett

General director of the Council of the Abenakis of Odanak

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To learn more about us and this important issue: <https://abenakiheritage.org/>

Wliwni,

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