

ODE TO ALKEBULAN

ALKEBU-LAN – THE ANCIENT NAME OF AFRICA. THE MOTHER OF MANKIND, THE GARDEN OF EDEN.

BY RECLAIMING THE STOLEN LEGACY OF INDIGENOUS ORIGINS, I HONOR MY AFRICAN ANCESTORS AND CALL OUT THEIR NAMES.

THE COUNTLESS NAMES WE KEEP ON OUR LIPS, SO THAT THEY NEVER DIE. WE CALL OUT THE NAMES, KNOWN AND UNKNOWN, THOSE WHO WERE KIDNAPPED AND STOLEN FROM THEIR HOMELAND.

ALL WHO DIED AND ALL THAT SURVIVED THE TRANSATLANTIC SLAVE TRADE – THE MIDDLE PASSAGE, I HONOR YOU.

FROM THE WEST INDIES TO THE SHORES OF “THE NEW WORLD”, FROM CAN-SEE-TO-CAN’T SEE. I HONOR THE ANCESTORS.

FROM SUFFERING TO PEACE, WE SAY ÁSE. I STAND TALL ON THE SHOULDERS OF MY WEST AFRICAN HERITAGE – FROM THE SUB-SAHARAN TO THE BANKS OF THE NILE RIVER AND THE CARIBBEAN, WE SURVIVED.

WE REMEMBER THE AFRICAN DIASPORA AND RECOGNIZE THE POWER OF OUR PEOPLE. IN THE MIDST OF THE STORMS, WE CONTINUE TO OVERCOME – AN ODE TO ALKEBULAN, A HOMAGE TO ALL THAT WE WERE, ARE, AND WILL BE – ÁSE.

LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT

WE WANT TO ACKNOWLEDGE AND RECOGNIZE THAT WE SIT ON THE ORIGINAL HOMELAND OF THE ARAPAHO, APACHE, CHEYENNE, SHOSHONE AND UTE NATIONS, PUEBLO, KIOWA, NAVAJO TRIBES, AND PEOPLE.

WE RECOGNIZE AND HONOR INDIGENOUS PEOPLES AS THE TRADITIONAL STEWARDS OF THIS LAND, AND THE ENDURING RELATIONSHIP THAT EXISTS BETWEEN INDIGENOUS PEOPLES AND THEIR TRADITIONAL TERRITORIES.

WE RECOGNIZE THIS LAND, IN A THOUGHTFUL, PURPOSEFUL, MINDFUL WAY - IT IS AN EXPRESSION OF GRATITUDE AND APPRECIATION TO THOSE WHOSE TERRITORY WE RESIDE ON.

AND A WAY IN WHICH TO HONOR INDIGENOUS PEOPLES WHO HAVE BEEN LIVING AND WORKING THE LAND FROM THE IMMEMORIAL.

IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT WE NOT JUST SHOW ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF THE TERRITORIES OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES, BUT WE GO BEYOND THAT, AND TAKE STEPS, AND WHAT IS KEY, TOWARDS RECONCILIATION WITH ABORIGINAL, FIRST NATION, AND INDIGENOUS PEOPLES.