Marcie Rendon:

Boozhoo, Awanewquay indizhinakoz, Migizi nidodem, Gaa-waabaabiganikaag indoonjiba. My English name is Marcie Rendon, I am Eagle clan, and a member of the White Earth Nation. The poem I'm going to read for you is titled “Resilience.”

[Marcie Rendon reads “Resilience”]

MR: A couple years ago I was a presenter at a healing conference. All the women in attendance were wearing beautiful beaded earrings and exquisite ribbon skirts. One statement in my talk was “Healing isn't always pretty. You all look so lovely, you truly do. However, when we heal, we cry and our eyes puff up, our noses run, and if we are healing rage our faces contort into snarls. Healing isn’t always pretty.” Along came Covid-19 and the quarantine that accompanies it. Then the murder of George Floyd and resulting revolutionary actions. A number of arts agencies and programs asked for artwork about surviving the pandemic and civil unrest. My first response was, “As native people this isn’t our first pandemic and it certainly isn’t our first war.” One Native organization asked for a Native response to both incidences. As a writer, not a visual artist, I wrote the poem “Resilience.” I think that often our resilience is romanticized by others—we become these strong, stoic ‘Indians.’ The original title for this unpublished poem was “Resilience Isn’t Always Pretty.”

Miigwech.

END OF RECORDING