

Living Nations, Living Words: A Map of First Peoples Poetry
Poem commentary by Sy Hoahwah, 2020

Speaker: Sy Hoahwah

Date of recording: July 12, 2020

Location: Benton, Arkansas, poet's home

Length: 8 minutes, 58 seconds

START OF RECORDING

Sy Hoahwah: Hello, my name is Sy. I will be reading the poem entitled "Hell's Acre." It's in five parts.

[Sy Hoahwah reads "Hell's Acre"]

SH: This poem encapsulates visibility. The visibility of being in two places at the same time. The idea that—to exist and not to exist. I consider myself an Indigenous poet, but yet also a Southern poet. And also neither. I consider myself just a man.

"Hell's Acre" is actually a place in Arkansas, in the Ozarks. I've been there myself when I was a child, and it's always held a fascination for me. If I was to try to find it, I probably couldn't. "Hell's Acre" is actually a local name for part of the Boston Mountains, the southern part—that mountain range.

END OF RECORDING