

Sam Aros-Mitchell is a Yaqui choreographer, cultural producer, scholar, and performer based in Minneapolis, and an enrolled member of the Texas Band of Yaqui Indians. His work moves between Indigenous cosmologies, experimental dance, and performance installation, activating space as a site of ceremony, resistance, and collective witnessing.

Born in Imperial Valley, California, Aros-Mitchell's early life was shaped by the foster care system, adoption, and the borderland geographies of the Southwest. These experiences inform work that engages the complexities of being a Native adoptee, displaced from, but never disconnected from, cultural knowledge and land. His choreography insists that the adopted Indigenous body is not incomplete but encoded, carrying ancestral memory and reanimating what was obscured.

Rooted in Indigenous ontologies and land-based practice, his performances emerge from embodied research and ceremonial methodologies, dissolving the boundaries between dance, theatre, and visual art. He is among the first Yaqui artists to reconstruct and perform José Limón's *The Unsung* (Deer Solo) and *Danzas Mexicanas* (Indio Solo), a collaboration with Dante Puleio, Director of the Limón Dance Company, and a shared Yaqui lineage between choreographer and interpreter. Recent original works include *Juya Nokakamea* (2024), an immersive performance environment drawn from the Yaqui creation story of the talking tree, and *Entering Aniam* (2023), an immersive sound and movement installation. Since 2017 he has been a core collaborator with Rosy Simas Danse.

He holds a Ph.D. in Drama and Theatre from the joint doctoral program at UC San Diego and UC Irvine, an M.F.A. in Dance Theatre from UC San Diego, and a B.F.A. in Dance from UC Santa Barbara. His dissertation, *Writing Indigeneity: Circularities through the Codices of the Native Body*, theorizes performance as ceremonial code, where the body becomes an archive of survivance, memory, and cultural transmission. His current book project, *Performance as Ceremony*, offers a framework for Indigenous performance theory grounded in fieldwork, rehearsal practice, and Yaqui epistemologies.

As an educator, Aros-Mitchell teaches Muscle/Bone technique (inspired by Min Tanaka's Body Weather), somatic improvisation, and interdisciplinary courses on Indigenous performance and design, with a mentorship practice emphasizing Indigenous pedagogy, land-based research, and somatic justice. He is the founder of SAROS field/works, a platform for Indigenous and BIPOC-led performance; the NE/X Festival (North East Experimental): A Festival of Indigenous Performance; and the Native Joy Play Festival. With his son he founded Aros & Son, a Native-owned company supporting Indigenous publishing, collaborative media, and mentorship. He serves on the council of the Native American and Indigenous Studies Association.

A Jerome Hill Artist Fellow (2025–28) and McKnight Dance Fellow (2023), his work has been supported by the Minnesota State Arts Board, the Jerome Foundation, the McKnight Foundation, the Metropolitan Regional Arts Council, and the City of Minneapolis Arts & Cultural Affairs Department. Across all projects, his practice is guided by kinship, ritual, and the conviction that performance is not merely art, it is an embodied act of presence, memory, and cultural continuity.