

**Ariel Luckey** is a nationally acclaimed poet, actor, and playwright whose community and performance work dances in the crossroads of education, art, and activism. Named a “Visionary” by the Utne Reader, Ariel seamlessly weaves storytelling, spoken word poetry, dance, acting, and hip hop music in compelling narratives of personal and political transformation. Drawing on years of direct experience in social and environmental movements, Ariel offers provocative stories of heart breaking injustice and inspiring examples of resistance.

Born and raised in Oakland, California, the eldest son of author/activist, Paul Kivel, and biochemistry professor, Mary Luckey, Ariel embraced the values of social justice, ecological balance, and respect for life at a young age. Simultaneously he fell in love with the stage and went on to study with master artists such as June Jordan, Patch Adams, Wavy Gravy, and Augusto Boal. Ariel has been a featured artist at the North Bay Hip Hop Theater Festival, the Hecho en Califas Festival, Café Cantante in Havana, Cuba, the Nuyorican Poets Cafe in New York City, and the White Privilege Conference, and has inspired and informed audiences at theaters, conferences, community centers, and classrooms across the country.

Ariel is the founder and director of the **Free Land Project**. The Free Land Project produces dynamic hip hop theater performance art, keynotes, workshops, forums, educational materials, and cultural events throughout the United States. At the heart of its work is *Free Land*, Ariel’s hip hop theater solo show that explores the personal, political, and spiritual cost of white privilege gained by the brutal mistreatment of Native Americans and the theft of their land. Free Land was commissioned by La Peña Cultural Center and the White Privilege Conference/the Matrix Center through the National Performance Network’s Creation Fund in 2008. Ariel also curates and emcees the annual cultural arts event **Thangs Taken: rethinking thanksgiving** in the San Francisco Bay Area. Thangs Taken brings Native and non-Native artists, activists, and communities together to engage in a critical dialogue about the impact of Thanksgiving and the history it represents on our communities through visual and performance art.

Ariel Luckey digs deep into our past and raises critical questions for our present and future, calling on each of us to grapple with who we are, who we stand with, and what we stand for. His performances and presentations masterfully synthesize personal experience, family story, and historical context to highlight the connections between race, class, and land in America. His first book, a collection of poetry and lyrics entitled *Searching for White Folk Soul*, is currently in its third printing. Ariel will publish an arts-based Curriculum Guide for *Free Land* in 2010.

Ariel sees his community work in the world as an extension of his most precious and important work as father to his two sons.