

A circular collage of various images including a beaver, a wolf, a person, a landscape, a person in a green jacket, a person holding a child, a person with a large eye, a landscape with a teepee, and a bird.

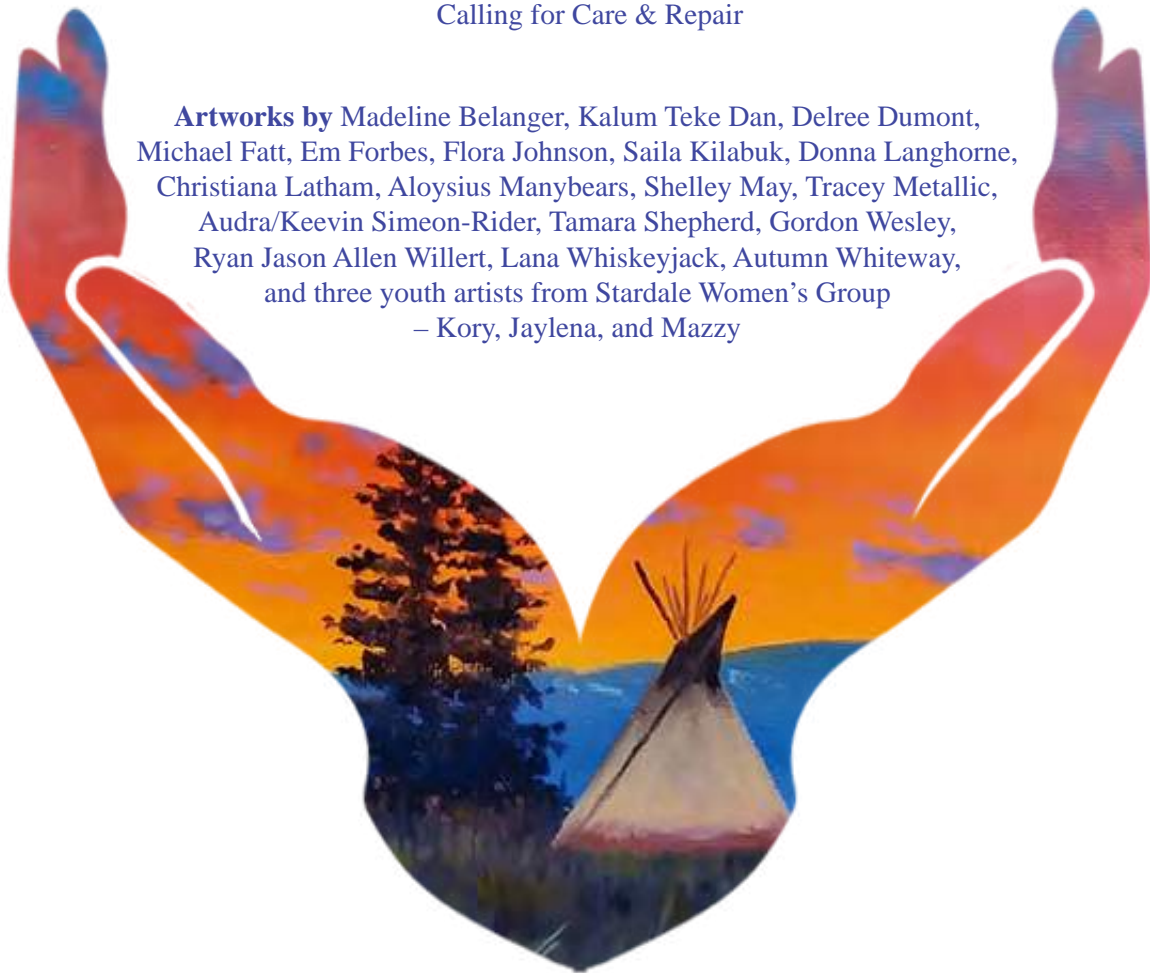
# ReconciliACTIONS

*A Travelling Exhibition  
Calling for Care & Repair*

# ReconciliACTIONS

A Travelling Exhibition  
Coordinated by TREX Southwest and Colouring it Forward  
Calling for Care & Repair

**Artworks by** Madeline Belanger, Kalum Teke Dan, Delree Dumont,  
Michael Fatt, Em Forbes, Flora Johnson, Saila Kilabuk, Donna Langhorne,  
Christiana Latham, Aloysius Manybears, Shelley May, Tracey Metallic,  
Audra/Keevin Simeon-Rider, Tamara Shepherd, Gordon Wesley,  
Ryan Jason Allen Willert, Lana Whiskeyjack, Autumn Whiteway,  
and three youth artists from Stardale Women's Group  
– Kory, Jaylena, and Mazzy



*The Alberta Foundation for the Arts and the Travelling Exhibition program acknowledges that the artistic activity we support takes place on the territories of Treaties 6, 7, and 8. We acknowledge the many First Nations, Métis, and Inuit who have lived on and cared for these lands for generations, and we are grateful for the traditional Knowledge Keepers, Elders, and those who have gone before us. We make this acknowledgement as an act of reconciliation and gratitude to those whose territory we reside on. We reaffirm our commitment to strengthening our relationships with Indigenous communities and growing our shared knowledge and understanding.*

The Alberta Foundation for the Arts Travelling Exhibition (TREX) program

Curated by Diana Frost and Ashley Slemming

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# Indigenous Lives Matter



Whiteway 2020

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Autumn Whiteway  
*Indigenous Lives Matter*, 2020  
Canvas print of digitally altered photograph  
Courtesy of the artist

# ABOUT

## **Travelling Exhibition Program (TRES)**

Since 1980, the Alberta Foundation for the Arts (AFA) has supported a provincial travelling exhibition program. The TRES program strives to ensure every Albertan is provided with an opportunity to enjoy fully developed exhibitions in schools, libraries, healthcare centres, and smaller rural institutions and galleries throughout the province.

The TRES program assists in making both the AFA's extensive art collection and the artwork of contemporary Alberta artists available to Albertans. Four regional organizations coordinate the program for the AFA:

REGION ONE — Northwest: The Art Gallery of Grande Prairie

REGION TWO — Northeast / North Central: The Art Gallery of Alberta

REGION THREE — Southwest: The Alberta Society of Artists

REGION FOUR — Southeast: The Esplanade Arts & Heritage Centre

## **The Alberta Society of Artists (ASA)**

The Alberta Society of Artists is a large part of Alberta's visual arts history, through its members, its exhibitions, and other initiatives. The ASA was founded in 1931, making it the oldest society of juried professional artists in the province.

The ASA is an active membership of professional visual artists who strive for quality and distinction. Through exhibition, education, and communication the society increases public awareness of the visual arts.

The ASA is contracted by the AFA to develop and circulate TRES exhibitions to communities throughout southwestern Alberta.

## **The Alberta Foundation for the Arts (AFA)**

Beginning in 1972, the Alberta Art Collection was proposed as an opportunity to support and encourage Alberta artists by purchasing original works, as well as creating a legacy collection for the people of Alberta.

The AFA was established as a Crown agency of the Government of Alberta through the Alberta Foundation for the Arts Act in 1991, with a mandate to support the arts in Alberta. This mandate is accomplished by providing persons and organizations with the opportunity to participate in the arts in Alberta; fostering and promoting the enjoyment of works of art by Alberta artists; collecting, preserving, and displaying works of art by Alberta artists; and encouraging artists resident in Alberta to continue their work.

## **Colouring it Forward (CIF)**

Colouring It Forward is a social enterprise including a not-for-profit organization called CIF Reconciliation Society and a business called Colouring It Forward Inc. The purpose of the social enterprise is to advance education on Indigenous issues, art, language, and culture through a grassroots approach.

CIF Reconciliation Society works in collaboration with organizations such as IndigeSTEAM, Stardale Women’s Group, and more to deliver art-based workshops and events that provide education on Indigenous ways of knowing and promote healing and reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples. We organize an annual Orange Shirt Day Walk and Event called Pokaiks the Children.

Current programming includes the Blackfoot language app project which is made in collaboration with Kaleidoscope and Blackfoot Confederacy.



# EXHIBITION STATEMENT

*"Atikotc eici tepwetamak, eici apitentakwak, kitci kikinowamatisowak kapena kcti mino witciiieikki mino mantominan acitc ka tepentciketc kitci apak ka ici makopisowak, kitci nimiak tac iimikana, ka ici moseek eka maci awiakok ka ici pikopotowatc."*

"Regardless of our beliefs, what matters is to learn to commune with our spirit and with the Great Spirit to free ourselves from our suffering and to dance freely on this path that has not been burnt by the modern world."

– Dominique (T8aminik) Rankin and Marie-Josée Tardif  
(co-founders of the Kina8at-Together Indigenous Organization)

The exhibition *ReconciliACTIONS* reminds us that reconciliation is an ongoing process, a chain of care and repair, not a one-and-done event. Decolonizing our relationships with one another and drawing new pathways of understanding based on mutual respect is empowering for all of us. Indigenous, settler, immigrant, and refugee alike all play an integral role in enacting reconciliation. Dominique (T8aminik) Rankin and Marie-Josée Tardif explain in the quote above that what matters most for everyone, regardless of beliefs, is that we free ourselves from suffering by learning to dance on the path that has not been burnt by the modern world. We are being encouraged to rebuild balance and harmony into our lives *together* – a dance free of the shame, self-importance, greed, and noise of modern life. These modern world attributes have clouded our ability to truly see each other, inhibiting the repair of our relationships, individually and collectively. We cannot move forward in reconciliation if we do not listen and dance with patience and vulnerability.

*ReconciliACTIONS* is an invitation to contemplate how we can show up with care in actively carrying reconciliation forward. All persons have agency to create ripples of change, and the Indigenous artists who are included in this exhibition are contributing to this change by educating the public and sharing their knowledge and experiences through their art. As you look at each artwork, consider the artist, their experiences, and what message each artwork might be conveying. Consider how your own actions can be instruments of change in the ongoing process of reconciliation.

The year 2023, when this exhibition begins its tour, marks the eighth year since the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) released its multi-volume report to outline the inequities, injustices and generational trauma inflicted upon Indigenous peoples in what many now know as Canada, but that many also more broadly see as a part of Turtle Island (North America). This report summarized what can be done to repair and reconcile the harms done historically, as well as identifies specific actions that can be taken to correct ongoing inequities and injustices that are continually harming Indigenous peoples today.



The 2015 report included 94 Calls to Action, and in the last eight years, only thirteen of them have been completed – a snail’s pace for change.<sup>1</sup>

As Dr. Eva Jewell writes in *2022 Calls to Action Accountability: A 2022 Status Update*,

...too much of the work of reconciliation has, until now, focused on symbols and not structures. We seem to be stuck in an eternal prologue, trying to define the problems that need to be solved, but with incomplete data, laden with grand but ultimately empty promises from all levels of government, and with all of this covered with a thick layer of orange-glazed “good intentions.”<sup>2</sup>

In the *ReconciliACTIONS* education guide, we have included the 94 Calls to Action and their current progress (page 30.) There are also several discussion questions, activities, and resources provided, all of which are meant as an urgent impetus to seek out and understand specific tangible actions everyone can take to carry reconciliation beyond "good intentions."

We hope you will take the time to read, reflect and respond with *ACTION* after reading about each of the artists in this exhibition, about the 94 Calls to Action, and about YOUR part in enacting change for future generations.

– Curators Diana Frost and Ashley Slemming



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<sup>1</sup> *Calls to Action Accountability: A 2022 Status Update on Reconciliation*, edited by Eva Jewell and Ian Mosby, Yellowhead Institute, 2022, p. 6. <https://yellowheadinstitute.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/TRC-Report-12.15.2022-Yellowhead-Institute-min.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

# ARTISTS

**Madeline Belanger** – Madeline Belanger is from Saddle Lake Cree Nation. Her name *Sakaw Iskwew* means Bush Woman in the Cree language. It is a legacy name because it belonged to her grandmother. When she was a child, her older cousin Leon showed her a drawing he had made of a horse. Ever since then, she became fascinated with art. She learned about drawing and painting in high school and has mostly been self-taught since then. Her art is inspired by her culture, the natural world, her dreams and experiences. Madeline is part of the Arts Collective of Canada – ([passthefeather.org](http://passthefeather.org)). She has been featured in Colouring It Forward’s Indigenous Art Calendars and one of their lined notebooks. Madeline’s work has also been showcased in various exhibits including the *Indigenous Motherhood and Matriarchy* exhibition in Calgary, and *Art From the Unknown* in 2019.

**Kalum Teke Dan** – My name is Kalum Teke Dan. My ancestry is of the Blood Tribe in southern Alberta. I have created a large number of paintings and murals over the last 15 years of my career as an Indigenous artist based out of Calgary, Alberta. It is my connection to my traditional, spiritual, and cultural background that has inspired my body of work. I grew up in Calgary with my mom Joanne Dan, who has been supportive throughout my career that began in my teens. I am primarily self-taught, developing my skills through observations, practice, and dedication to my craft. I work in oil, acrylic, and watercolour, choosing themes that reflect my unique perceptions of my spirituality and being Indigenous in modern-day society.

My designs represent my conceptualizations of the subjects I am painting, whether it is an individual, a group, animals, or a compilation. I have participated in large-scale events throughout the years, including showcasing at the Vancouver Community College during the 2010 Winter Olympics, and the Calgary Stampede at the Western Oasis Showcase in 2016 and 2017. My work is in the personal collection of several Canadian Premiers, international leaders, and many of Canada’s leading corporations and educational institutions. It has been displayed in art galleries across Canada and the U.S. I have enjoyed sharing my work at Indigenous conferences, pow wows, and events. In 2016, I created a body of work for a colouring book authored by Diana Frost, titled “Colouring It Forward-Discover Blackfoot Nation Art and Wisdom” and have been featured in her calendars, journals and clothing.

In the past 5 years, I have created many large public art murals in Calgary and Edmonton. They included a mural for the Calgary Stampede Indian Village, a mural on an exterior wall at 17th Avenue Framing, as well as a large mural in the lobby of the new City of Calgary Public Library. I have recently completed a compilation on an exterior wall at the John Howard Society, Calgary and have completed a mural artwork for Calgary City Hall.

**Delréé Dumont** – Delréé Dumont was born in Chilliwack, British Columbia and is a member of Onion Lake Cree Nation, SK. In her earlier years, she moved to Alberta and worked in the corporate world for 32 years. In 2014, she turned to her emerging desire to showcase her artistry and her Indigenous heritage, and thus left the corporate world and never looked back. Her early works were of the realist style, using primarily oil and watercolour. She has emerged as more of a self-taught pointillism artist using acrylics, with many of her works having an Indigenous flair. In addition to her painting, other art forms she is involved in include leatherwork, Indigenous craft/art creations, and being a Traditional Powwow Dancer. Delréé is an internationally recognized Cree artist with her works shown in Italy, Germany, and across in Canada. She has also been showcased in several Canadian local and regional magazines and articles. In addition to her works being exhibited in galleries, she is very community minded and is involved in local and regional art shows, craft shows and Powwows. Delréé has also been nominated several times and has won awards relative to her artwork and her business, Delréé's Native Art Gallery. She has recently relocated to the southern interior of British Columbia and continues to derive artistic inspiration from the beauty of nature that surrounds her new home and life.

**Michael Fatt** – Michael Fatt is a Chipewyan Dene from Lutselk'e, a fly-in community near Yellowknife, NWT, located on upper east arm of the Great Slave Lake. Michael's art has always been a part of his life. As a young child in a foster home, his artistic talent was noticed and he was entered into an art course at the Winnipeg Art Gallery. He faced much adversity in life and after spending time in and out of jail, he returned to his original community. Here he was inspired to learn more about his people and the stories he listened to and learned to love, which helped him evolve his work into a unique style. His art has been shown at the Moonstone Creation Native Gallery and Gift Shop in Calgary, and in several fairs in Banff, Canmore, Morley and Symons Valley Ranch. In late 2016, he also created a live painting, which was auctioned off at Ground Zero Theatre.

**Em Forbes** – Em Forbes is a mixed Inuk-Caribbean student in Calgary and they started post-secondary studies in the fall of 2021 with plans to be a graphic designer. Em was a featured artist with the Project Projekt exhibition at Chinook Blast 2021 and recently received support from the Calgary Arts Development to design and share orange shirts to help raise awareness around Orange Shirt Day and the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation. Follow Em @IndigenousNotions on IG and FB.

**Flora Johnson** – As a Professional Artist, I know that being passionate about my work has helped me advance and succeed in this field. I've learned the importance of paying attention to the story that each project is trying to tell, a valuable lesson that has led me to find quality work in diverse projects and gain experience.

Motivated and committed to my craft, I'm capable of transforming an idea into a creative production that leaves an impact on the audience. I am proud of my First Nation Indigenous Heritage and I am a strong supporter of women, showcasing their strength and spirituality in my work. I use bright bold colour which evokes strong emotions, and I use my skills as an artist to help me heal. Teaching others to paint has helped many to heal and find their own warrior within. I volunteer at a few local schools, working with Indigenous children to teach them through stories and art. Skilled in many different mediums, I create acrylics on canvas, handmade and painted hand drums, leatherwork (3D hand formed skull purses, binder covers...) and hand painted feathers for smudging or display.

I am a proud First Nation Indigenous artist who was born in Flin Flon Manitoba, Canada, from the Mosakahiken Cree Nation. I am a mother of three children and grandmother of seven grandkids. I am a survivor of the 60s scoop and was adopted at a very young age. I returned home to Canada about twenty or more years ago. I work in many art forms, acrylic on canvas paintings, leather, feathers, etc... and I am committed to empowering women through art. I retired as a B pressure welder, and went through secondary schooling. I feel that my work shows strength, spirituality, and the warrior within all women and families.

**Saila Kilabuk** – Originally a child of the land from the Qikiqtaaluk region of Nunavut. Saila Kilabuk has drifted west and is now an urban Inuk in Calgary, a single mother of twins, and an artist. Her art is an escape from the modern demands of city life, and at the same time a longing for reconnection with her past and culture. Every brush stroke evokes the power of her ancestors, and she paints symbolic images that transcend urban modernity and revitalize the spirit of the north. Her work is a kind of artistic alchemy where she mixes paint with pain. Through art, she converts trauma and emotional hardship into the beautiful. Saila dives deep into the emotional content of her life experience, and emerges with inspiration. She truly embodies the potential of post-traumatic growth and is an inspiration for all who feel the desire to create. Saila Kilabuk says she is "...a proud Inuk who wants to show the world that beauty can come from hardships and pain."

**Donna Rose Langhorne** – A member of Fishing Lake First Nation, Donna Rose Langhorne is a lifelong resident of Air Ronge, Saskatchewan. She is a mother of three children between the ages of five and ten years and has been working in Northern Saskatchewan as a self-taught professional artist since 2010. (Continued next page.)

Donna suffers from a debilitating condition that makes it extremely traumatic for her to travel. She is under physician's care but continues to struggle with this affliction. Dealing with this confining reality has greatly influenced her artwork, underpinning in one way or another virtually everything she creates, both structurally and thematically. However, this has made it very difficult for her to connect with and integrate into the arts community and to establish herself in a broader marketplace, let alone pursue mentorship and professional development opportunities. Even acquiring supplies is difficult, and costly, since they are not readily available in the remote Northern community where Donna lives.

Despite all of these challenges, Donna has produced and sold upwards of 100 paintings, including private, public and corporate commissions. Her chief market has perforce been limited to the economically challenged Northern region, however she participates at every opportunity in local trade fairs, and her work has received considerable exposure and acclaim in this way. Donna has worked hard to establish an online presence and is the owner/operator of the Donna The Strange On-Line Art Gallery, which has an avid following. Her work has become increasingly recognized through sales, grants from funding bodies, and invitations to exhibit from curators and galleries.

Donna recently received a grant to make a series of paintings on the theme of Reconciliation. This exhibition features one of her pieces on the Murdered and Missing Indigenous Women and Girls, featured in Colouring It Forward's 2018 Indigenous Art Calendar.

**Christiana Latham** – Christiana Latham is a multidisciplinary artist of Northern Native and British decent. She obtained a Bachelor of Fine Arts Degree in Multimedia Arts and Design Technologies in 2015 and is moved on to take printmaking as a minor at The Alberta College of Art and Design (now Alberta University of the Arts). Christiana has exhibited her work in various galleries, and her films have been shown in film festivals worldwide. One of her most recent achievements was the acceptance of her latest film into GAMA (Gallery of Alberta Media Arts) at the Epcor Centre in Calgary in 2016.

Christiana's film *Jingle Dress* was also recently accepted into the Imagine Native 11 Media Film Festival in Toronto, Ontario. Several of her paintings and digital artworks have also been published in Canadian magazines. She also is a director of Indigeneity Artist Collective Society and has been co-presenting films with the Calgary Society of Independent Filmmakers and DreamSpeakers Film Festival.

Currently, Christiana Latham's main artistic focus is on film, watercolor and print media. Her artistic endeavours work to challenge personal growth and self-discovery. Christiana's work has evolved over time, but she remains constant in creating culturally explorative pieces that work to connect her past to her present.

**Aloysius Manybears** – Aloysius Manybears was born and raised on Siksika Nation. He was honored and given his Blackfoot name "Panoahkomii" meaning Early Thunder. He recalls the story shared with him by his grandfather Sun Calf of his brush with death while out riding his horse one day and he was struck by lightning, which killed his horse instantly. When his grandfather recovered, he later in life named some of his grandchildren after his near-death experience. Panoahkomii was a young child when he and his siblings were sent to Crowfoot Residential school and that was when he discovered his gifted talent and around fifteen years of age, he ran away from the school due to the abuse he suffered at the hands of the priests and nuns. He travelled extensively in search of work during his young adult years and returned back home one day and met and married Frances Medicine Shield and had and raised their children together. A few years later, he was sent to prison leaving his young wife alone to raise their young children. While in prison, he soon rediscovered his artistic talent and began drawing artwork sketches. While on visits with his wife, he would give her his paintings and she soon began thereafter promoting his artwork and sold them to support his family. When he was released from prison, both Aloysius and his wife Frances opened their joint business venture creating employment opportunities for others in their communities. They named their company Early Thunder Creations and became recognized and successful by selling their artwork and apparel products locally, nationally, and internationally. Some career highlights include his first prominent art show that he entered in Great Falls, Montana, in 1984, then, when his paintings were accepted to be displayed during the Vancouver World Expo in 1986, and when he gained international recognition after three of his original artwork pieces were chosen during the Calgary 1988 Winter Olympics.

All his artwork captures the rich cultural history and traditions of his ancestors, and the spiritual ways of the Blackfoot people, with distinctive style and symbolic expression. His artwork highlights the special relationships between man and nature using realism with care and attention to detail as told by his grandfather's oral traditional teachings that were passed on to him through his art to share with many future generations to come. Panoahkomii, passed away suddenly at the age of 68 years of age in 2005, leaving his wife, their children and grandchildren, and left many of his original artwork collection to his family as his lasting legacy....

**Shelley Rose May** – Shelley is a band member of Montreal Lake Cree Nation in Central Northern Saskatchewan and has roots in Fish Lake Métis Settlement. She was raised in the tiny village of Christopher Lake where she attended school from age five to thirteen years old. She moved to Calgary, Alberta with her family in 1990 and has called it home ever since.

In 2016, Shelley had a difficult year. First, her mother passed away, and then Shelley was diagnosed with advanced-stage cervical cancer. She now considers her health crisis a blessing because it helped her realize she was not living up to her full potential. She began using her art to let go of limiting beliefs and to transform.

**Tracey Metallic** – In the moment I don't always realize the impact my paintings will have on me. The memories they will breathe to life, the emotional toll they may take, or the impact they will create around my work. I'm not sure what my awakening was, but it can only be described as a revelation. There came a point in my life where I realized that everything I was going through, everything I had been through and my life experiences up until this point had all prepared me for this moment. That life, despite all it had caused me to suffer and sacrifice, was actually giving me valuable lessons. Lessons that were priming me for my inner greatness that was only realized after the veil of darkness was lifted from my spirit. The revelation.

I wake up each morning with these lessons I call gifts. I wrap those gifts around myself and imagine reaching out to that beautiful sun in an effort to catch its strength, its beauty and its purpose to rise each day, and to draw all that back into my spirit. To catch all the good, to feel the deep love I now have for myself and to embrace the opportunities that may have passed me by had my eyes not been opened.

I am so thankful for the path my life has taken that I can only look to the Stars each night as I whisper to them a prayer for the morning sun. I know now that there is nothing in life I cannot overcome. There is nothing in life YOU cannot overcome. Our strength is not in who we once were, but in who we are destined to become. We are Sun Catchers!

**Keevin Rider** – A member of the Bearspaw First Nation, born on the Blood Tribe reserve to Clifford and Kaye Rider, Keevin was raised on the Eden Valley reserve located west of Longview Alberta in the foothills of the Rocky Mountains.

Keevin is a self-taught artist. A love and respect for nature and the traditional ways of life have always been an inspiration for Keevin as depicted in much of his work. He began drawing at an early age – for him, drawing was a means of escape, now, he creates to inspire others.

It was an invitation to showcase his work at a conference that inspired him to pursue his goal of getting his artwork out on an international level. Today his artwork is located throughout the world in numerous private collections, whether it be one of his amazing paintings or one of his beautiful custom wood-burned art pieces.

Keevin's trademark signature is unique. His initials resemble a tipi. This is created by turning the "K" backwards and placing the "R" back to back, the bear paw represents his Stoney Nakoda lineage of the Bearspaw Tribe, and the four dots represent his four daughters.

Keevin is the creative artist behind several murals located throughout Southern Alberta. His most recent commissioned mural, "Story Tellers" is located in the Calgary Central Library's Indigenous Interpretive Centre.

**Tamara Shepherd** – Cree Calgary based Indigenous Artist Tamara Shepherd has a unique style that blends traditional techniques with contemporary elements. She often incorporates cultural depictions with deep ancestral meanings of healing, creating a powerful connection to her Indigenous roots. Her art is not just an expression of her own experience, but a way to connect and inspire others within and outside of her culture and community.

Tamara has developed a strong following on social media, where she shares her art and inspirations with the world. She represents her culture as a proud Member of White Bear First Nation, as well as her deepest desires to encourage Women through custom designed artwork based on their story and lives.

Tamara's work has been exhibited throughout Canada, and her pieces have been collected by private collectors both nationally and internationally. She is quickly becoming a sought-after First Nation artists in Canada, and her influence is sure to continue to grow.

Tamara Shepherd is a true inspiration, using her talent and creativity to express her culture, tell stories, and inspire connection. Through her art, she is leaving a lasting legacy and opening doors for generations to come.

**Stardale Women's Group Youth Artist, Jaylena** – “Hello, my name is Jaylena. I'm from Tsuu T'ina nation. I am Cree/Dene. I've always had a thing for art and animals. I definitely liked going for walks and making new friends. This painting is related to hope because in the meadows there is a clear path for more nature. Animals could be more taken care of, leading to vets as they could help more animals and shelters could get more space for animals. I always try to hope for the best. I painted a tree in the middle because it means new growth for the animals and the environment. The night and sunset means a new day everyday. My tree gets bigger and the branches get taller. I put purple in the sky for my late grandma, Mildred. I was really close to her and I added that colour for comfort. It was her favourite.”

**Stardale Women's Group Youth Artist, Kory** – “Hi, my name is Kory. I am from Siksika. My art means that when it feels like hope is gone, there's always that small bit of hope in your life that makes you motivated to keep on going and never stop until you are done.”

**Stardale Women's Group Youth Artist, Mazzy** – “Hello my name is Mazzy, I'm from Morley. I am Stoney Nakota. Delighted to say this is my art. My art is tied to hope and body positivity. For me hope is love, positivity (joy), home, and it doesn't always mean a roof over your head, it means to return to something or someone like a place to return to, something that gives you a feeling of joy or something that gives you peace of mind and state. What it means to me about the outcome or outlook, for some people it might be hard looking at your body and being in love with it, for others it might be easy but it's not for others to say. You only know yourself.”



**Gordon Wesley** – Gordon Wesley is passionate about bringing the life of the wild into a still picture, where he can always have them as memories from his wildlife experiences. He is a proud Nakoda Stoney from the Bighorn Reserve, where he was inspired to create life on canvas. Living in a quiet reserve in the mountains, Gordon can easily maintain the focus and concentrate on the essence of bringing the wildlife of the Rockies to the canvas. As a child, Gordon loved to be outdoors and watch the animals that inhabit his local geography. He was always curious about them and enjoyed their natural beauty. Gordon’s passion for nature comes from the desire to capture the spirit of the wild in art. (Continued next page.)

Gordon has participated in numerous exhibits, shows, and art sales such as the Tamarack Art Show & Sale, the World Indigenous People Conference on Education, Dale Auger & Friends’ First Nation Art & Sale Events, Preserving our Treaties, Consent & Silent Auction, Canada Day Celebration, Art Walk, Calgary Exhibit Stampede, Western Art Gallery, The Heritage Gala Celebration Aboriginal Heritage, Ducks Unlimited Canada, Fundraising Event, Western Indian Art Show, “Essence of the Wild” Sun & Moon Visionaries, Aboriginal Day in Jasper, AB, Moon Stone Gallery, and Pickin Party (Cochrane) and many more. Gordon has been featured in Colouring It Forward’s 2018, 2019 and 2021 Indigenous Art Calendars. He collaborated on a large interior mural commissioned for the lobby of the City of Calgary Library. One of his recent achievements has been to see his artwork featured by Alberta Parks on the Kananaskis Conservation Pass.

**Lana Whiskeyjack** – ayisîyiniw ôta asiskiy // I am human being from this earth.

Lana Whiskeyjack is a multidisciplinary treaty iskwew artist from Saddle Lake Cree Nation, Treaty Six Territory, Alberta. Guided by her grandmother’s advice, “Go to school, travel, and see as much as you can. Then return home to share what you learned, but do not forget where you came from.” After graduating high school, the young mom moved to Red Deer to attain her Art & Design diploma, then moved to Ottawa with her growing family, attaining B.A. (Honours) and M.A (Canadian Studies) degrees. The story continues with returning to work near her home community and attain her doctorate degree at University nuhelot’îne thâyots’î nistameyimâkanak Blue Quills (UnBQ) in iyiniw pimâtisiwin kiskeyihtamowin, the first Indigenous-owned-and-operated educational institution in Canada. Prior to 1970, UnBQ operated as Blue Quills Indian Residential School, where two generations of her maternal family attended.

Lana’s research, writing, and art explores the paradoxes of what it means to be nehiyaw (Cree) and iskwew (woman) in a Western culture and society; and, how she and other Indigenous peoples are reclaiming, re-gathering, and remembering their ancestral medicine (sacredness and power). Her art is passionate and expressive, born from the deep roots of her culture, history, and intergenerational relations. Through the examination of sometimes difficult subjects, her art reflects the intrinsic beauty of her interconnections with the earth, Cree language and all living beings. She invites you to join her on the next chapter of her adventure.

**Autumn Whiteway** – Autumn Whiteway (“Night Singing Woman”) is a Saulteaux (Ojibway)/ Métis archaeologist, artist, curator and educator based in Mohkinstsis (Calgary, Alberta). She is a member of Berens River First Nation in Manitoba but grew up in Treaty 7 territory. Autumn explores Indigenous themes from a contemporary perspective through painting, digital art, installation, and photography. Her painting and digital art is primarily focused on the heavily symbolic Woodland Style of art, while her photographic practice and installation is used as a form of activism to highlight Indigenous issues. Her curatorial work focuses on elevating the voices of Indigenous creatives through a series of Indigenous focused exhibitions. Additionally, she curates for Making Treaty 7 Cultural Society. She is a permit-holding archaeologist in Alberta and has an M.A. in Anthropology from the University of Manitoba (2017), a B.Sc. in Archaeology, and a B.A. in Greek and Roman Studies (2011).

Website: [www.autumn.ca](http://www.autumn.ca)

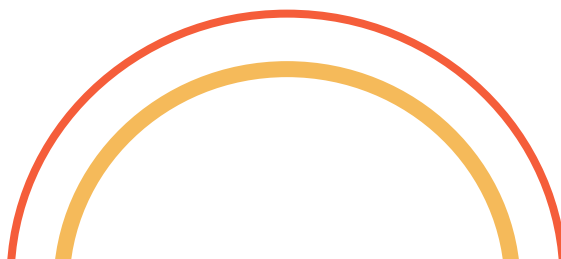
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/autumnwhitewayojicreations>

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/ojicreations/>

**Ryan Jason Allen Willert** – Ryan Jason Allen Willert is a professional artist and muralist living in Red Deer, Alberta. Ryan was born and raised in Southern Alberta. Although he was brought up in a non-Indigenous community, he has since reconnected with his Blackfoot roots (Siksika Nation) carrying many titles. Ryan learned the art of black ink drawing and sales from his father Richard (Dicky) Stimson, another artist from the Siksika Nation; and continues to grow as traditional Blackfoot artist.

He was one of two artists featured in the best-selling book *Colouring it Forward – Discover Blackfoot Nation Art & Wisdom*. He has also completed several large murals around the province of Alberta. Ryan was labelled the 2009 ‘Artist of the Year’ in *New Tribe Magazine*. He was also one of the collaborative artists for *Oh Canada Reads Coloring Book* and was selected to participate in “Three Things for Canada” where Calgary’s Mayor Nenshi challenged Canadians to perform three acts of service to the country in 2017. Later in 2017, Ryan was invited to one of the largest Native Arts Festivals in Canada, the Adaka Cultural Festival, as one of the featured artists. He was then commissioned to complete an installation for the Canada Games in 2019. You can find numerous published articles about Ryan’s career, including the Red Deer News Now article pronouncing him as one of Alberta’s most prominent Blackfoot artists.

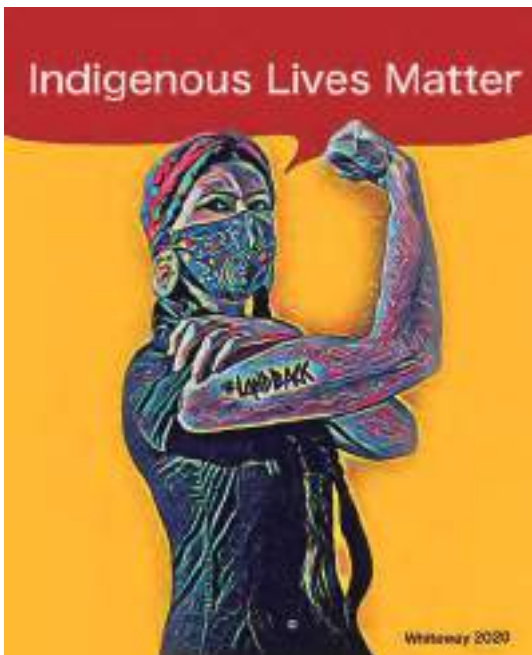
Some of Ryan’s work can be found in the award-winning documentary *Sacred Transitions* sponsored by TELUS, or in the 2019 special segment featured on APTN about Ryan’s life story and success as an artist. Ryan’s murals and installations can be found throughout Alberta, and he is rapidly gaining international attention resulting in his work being purchased and commissioned by people from around the world.



# ARTWORKS



Flora Johnson  
*Humility wolf Warrior woman who holds light*, 2023  
Canvas print of original oil on canvas  
Courtesy of the artist



Autumn Whiteway  
*Indigenous Lives Matter*, 2020  
Canvas print of digitally altered photograph  
Courtesy of the artist

This image was created as a visual representation of the year 2020 - giving a nod to Rosie the Riveter. The year was tumultuous between the COVID-19 pandemic and the exposure of systemic racism. This bolstered the Black Lives Matters and Indigenous Lives Matter movements, which gained more momentum by joining forces. Notable incidents in Canada included the Wet'suwet'en conflict and #shutdowncanada protest, threats to the moderate livelihood of Mi'kmaq lobster fishermen, and the 1492 Land Back Lane "occupation."



Stardale Women's Group - Mazzy

*Zeal*, n.d.

Canvas print of original acrylic painting

Courtesy of the artist

"My name is Mazzy, I'm from Morley. I am Stoney Nakata. Delighted to say this is my art. My art is tied to hope by body positivity. For me, hope is love, positivity (joy), home, and it doesn't always mean a roof over your head, it means returning to something or someone like a place - something that gives you a feeling of joy or something that gives you peace of mind and state. What it means to me is about the outcome or outlook; for some people, it might be hard looking at your body and being in love with it, for others, it might be easy, but it's not for others to say. You only know yourself."



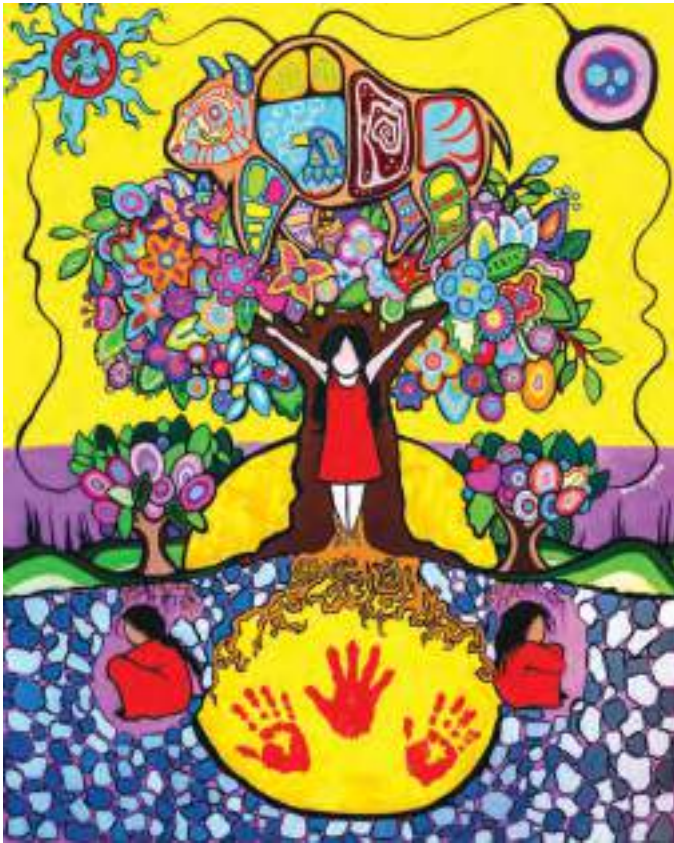
Shelley Rose May

*Truthseeker*, 2014

Canvas print of original mixed-media work

Courtesy of the artist

"Truthseeker" is about how all the answers are within ourselves and all we need to do is go within and connect with our truth. So many people are disconnected from who they really are as a spiritual being. When we see through spiritual sight and look at things from a higher perspective like the eagle does, we can see that everything is connected and separation is an illusion. Yet we get caught up in all these distractions of separation, thinking it is going to fill our soul but all it does is put us further away from the Great Spirit. If we can connect with Mother Earth and learn to listen to The Voice within, we can begin to heal and eventually find inner peace.



Donna Langhorne  
*Respect [Buffalo]: For Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women*, 2018  
Canvas print of original acrylic painting  
Courtesy of the artist

This Vision connects the teaching of Respect, symbolized by the life-sustaining Buffalo, as a means of healing the deep personal and cultural trauma inflicted on Indigenous women and girls. It teaches us the importance of dignifying these vulnerable women who were treated by their predators as faceless, nameless, dehumanized objects. Love plays a critical role to this end; thus, the image of the eagle is enveloped by the Buffalo. The hand prints acknowledge the individuality of those never found. Including reference to the 'red dress' movement, the Vision speaks to conditions where these women are at peace, their loss not in vain but, rather, serving as seeds for a safer, beautifully uplifting future.



Em Forbes  
*Untitled*, n.d.  
Canvas print of original digital design  
Courtesy of the artist



Christiana Latham

*Horned Owl*, n.d.

Canvas print of the original acrylic painting  
Courtesy of the Artist

The Snowy Owl, the Great Gray Owl and the Boreal Owl are owls found in the Gwich'in Settlement Area. They nest in trees and along river banks although the snowy owl can also be found in open areas. The snowy owl is also called "bush man" because it is believed to speak Gwich'in.



Aloysius Manybears

*Tradition (Passing On)*, 1999

Canvas print of the original acrylic painting  
Courtesy of the artist

*liniwa* (bison) is sacred among the Blackfoot peoples and other nations. It sacrificed its life that provided nourishing food, shelter, tools, and sacred and spiritual gifts of our ancestors in living in harmony with *ksaahkomm* (earth personified), with all living beings.



Keevin Rider

*White Buffalo Moon*, n.d.

Canvas print of the original acrylic painting

Courtesy of the artist

In this painting, the Buffalo on the left side represents the people, the seven empty lodges represent death, loneliness, sorrow, mourning, grief, hurt, and depression. The White Buffalo on the right represents Healing. He is looking towards the buffalo on the left and letting him know that he is there to help heal the people.

Keevin Rider's artist signature is also unique. The tipi makes up his initials, the bear's paw represents his First Nation and the four dots represent his four daughters.



Stardale Women's Group - Kory

*Light Carries Hope*, n.d.

Canvas print of original acrylic painting

Courtesy of the artist

"Hi, my name is Kory. I am from Siksika. My art means that when it feels like hope is gone, there's always that small bit of hope in your life that makes you motivated to keep on going and never stop until you are done."

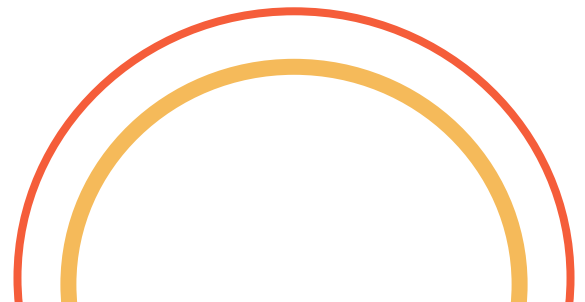


Delree Dumont  
*Self Portrait - Following our ancestors footsteps*  
2022  
Canvas print of the original acrylic painting  
Courtesy of the Artist



Lana Whiskeyjack  
*Three Generations Series #1*, 2014  
Canvas print of the original acrylic painting  
Courtesy of the artist

This painting was the first in the series of exploring the intergenerational trauma I carry from the wombs I come from, who survived Indian Residential Schools. Confronting to transcending unresolved trauma, was one of the most challenging self-care work I have nurtured. Learning about the systemic racism that oppressed generations of my family, helped me have more compassion for the woundedness in our kinship system. One of my daily practices is to give thanks to the wombs I come from.







Gordon Wesley  
*Untitled, 2023*  
Canvas print of the original oil on canvas  
Courtesy of the artist

Kalum Teke Dan  
*Past* (part of past, present, future series), 2021  
Canvas print of the original acrylic painting  
Courtesy of the artist

Part of Kalum's Past, Present, and Future series. This artwork represents the past.





Michael Fatt  
*Balance*, n.d.  
Canvas print of original oil on canvas  
Courtesy of the artist

This piece represents the natural order of the universe, how everything has its balance, but the order can be changed if we aren't careful, so this means care for your universe and everything in it because it's all there for a reason.

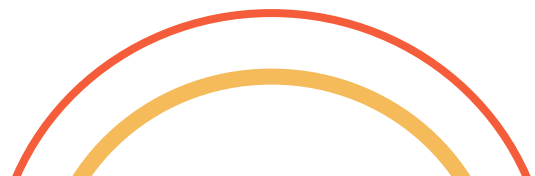


Tamara Shepherd  
*White Buffalo Goddess - The Prophecy's Return*, 2022  
Canvas print of original acrylic painting  
Courtesy of the artist

“White Buffalo Goddess-The Prophecy's Return” is a piece created to encapsulate the essence of a powerful Indigenous prophecy. The piece portrays the legendary figure of White Buffalo Woman, a revered symbol of hope and renewal in Indigenous cultures.

She stands at the centre, cloaked in a luminous white buffalo robe, which shimmers with ethereal light. Her presence exudes both strength and serenity, embodying the prophecy's promise of guidance and wisdom. The background is a tumultuous and chaotic world, symbolizing the period when humanity has turned against itself, beset by strife and discord. Yet, amidst this turmoil, the return of White Buffalo Woman signifies a beacon of hope and reconciliation. Her arrival heralds a chance for humanity to rediscover harmony, unity, and spiritual connection with the Earth.

“White Buffalo Goddess - The Prophecy’s Return” is meant to invite viewers to contemplate the profound message of the Indigenous prophecy, reminding us of the enduring power of unity, wisdom, and the hope for a better world, even in the face of adversity. This artwork serves as a testament to the belief that when humanity needs her most, White Buffalo Woman will return to guide us toward a brighter future.





Tracey Metallic  
*Truth*, 2022  
Canvas print of original mixed-media work  
Courtesy of the artist



Saila Kilabuk  
*Breaking the Curse*, 2022  
Canvas print of original acrylic painting  
Courtesy of the artist

This piece is titled "Breaking the Curse" because as an Indigenous person, there was a lot of generational trauma that came from being born into this culture and the fact that we are all Indigenous people who have been around since the beginning. Coming to terms with my ancestor's history was and still is haunting. Breaking the curse is breaking the patterns that have always existed in my life, passed from my mother and father, including racist attitudes towards our own people. Also breaking free of my own beliefs and "the real world" to embrace my own spiritual identity and the way I see things and rewriting/ relearning my own history in a series of realizations.



Stardale Women's Group - Jaylena  
*New Beginning*, n.d.  
 Canvas print of original acrylic painting  
 Courtesy of the artist

"My name is Jaylena. I am from Tsuu T'ina nation. I am Cree/Dene. I've always had a thing for art and animals. I definitely liked going for walks and making new friends. This painting is related to hope because in the meadows, there is a clear path for more nature. Animals could be more taken care of, leading to vets as they could help more animals and shelters could get more space for animals. I always try to hope for the best. I painted a tree in the middle because it means new growth for the animals and the environment. The night and sunset means a new day everyday. My tree gets bigger and the branches get taller. I put purple in the sky for my late grandma, Mildred. I was really close to her and I added that colour for comfort. It was her favourite."



Madeline Belanger  
*Tell me a story*, 2023  
 Canvas print of original mixed-media work

This piece is about the frictions between Indigenous peoples and the colonial world/crown, representations of justice, representations of strength and warrior society.

It is called "Tell me a story" because of the story telling tradition in Cree culture. This particular piece is connected to some of the stories I heard from my late uncles and my dad. I grew up hearing about our colonial past and the impact it had on our family. I heard stories of starvation, war, and how our family was impacted by these things.

This piece was also part of an exhibit organized by Making Treaty 7 Cultural Society at Arts Commons, in conjunction with the play *Little Red Warrior and His Lawyer* which was hosted at Theatre Calgary in early 2023.



Ryan Jason Allen Willert  
*Black-Billed Magpie*, 2020  
Canvas print of original acrylic painting  
Courtesy of the artist

*Mamia'tsikimii* is the magpie in Blackfoot. Magpies historically followed bison herds and disappeared from the province during the time of the bison slaughters. They soon returned to the region, cleverly adapting to life in both rural and urban areas. They construct large, domed stick nests that conceal and protect their eggs and young from harsh weather and predators. They also mate for life and have been known to gather in “funerals.” When a magpie discovers one of its kin has died, it begins calling loudly to attract other magpies. Gatherings of cawing magpies (up to forty birds have been observed) may last for ten to fifteen minutes before the birds silently fly away.

# EDUCATION GUIDE

This education guide consists of activities to move audiences through the various themes presented in *ReconciliACTIONS*. The content of the exhibition and the following lesson plans have been carefully developed and designed to enhance the curriculum set by Alberta Education. The guide includes questions for discussion and activities designed for the level of ability, understanding and complexity of the participants:

**Beginner** – participants who are just beginning their exploration of art.

**Intermediate** – participants who have some experience looking at and creating art.

**Advanced** – participants who have much experience looking at and creating art.

**Please note:** The topic of reconciliation requires intersectional critical thinking, relational care, and conscientious vulnerability. The Education Guide provided here cannot cover this complex topic completely – instead, this guide serves as a prompt to encourage all who engage with the exhibition *ReconciliACTIONS* to take it upon themselves to learn more on their own. We can all benefit from keeping an open mind and open heart to listen, learn, and act in care and compassion towards all our relations. Please read and review additional education materials provided in the Resources section at the back of this guide.



# CALLS TO ACTION

For over 150 years, residential schools operated in Canada. Over 150,000 children attended these schools. Many never returned to their families. Often underfunded and overcrowded, these schools were used as a tool of assimilation by the Canadian state and churches. Thousands of students suffered physical and sexual abuse. All suffered from loneliness and a longing to be home with their families. The damages inflicted by these schools continue to this day. In 2009, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada began a multi-year process to listen to Survivors, communities and others affected by the Residential School system. The resulting collection of statements, documents and other materials now forms the heart of the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation.”<sup>3</sup>

As part of their Final Report, *Honouring the Truth, Reconciling for the Future*, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) issued **94 Calls to Action** necessary to, “... redress the legacy of residential schools and advance the process of Canadian reconciliation.”<sup>4</sup>

Below and on the following pages, you can see which actions the government has completed, which are in progress, and which are not even started. Please consider whether you can take any actions to help move these forward, and if you need some ideas, review the **THINGS YOU CAN DO** section on pages 44 and 45.

 Completed

 In Progress

 Not Started

## CHILD WELFARE

1. We call upon the federal, provincial, territorial, and Aboriginal governments to commit to reducing the number of Aboriginal children in care by:
  - i. Monitoring and assessing neglect investigations.
  - ii. Providing adequate resources to enable Aboriginal communities and child-welfare organizations to keep Aboriginal families together where it is safe to do so, and to keep children in culturally appropriate environments, regardless of where they reside.
  - iii. Ensuring that social workers and others who conduct child-welfare investigations are properly educated and trained about the history and impacts of residential schools.
  - iv. Ensuring that social workers and others who conduct child-welfare investigations are properly educated and trained about the potential for Aboriginal communities and families to provide more appropriate solutions to family healing.
  - v. Requiring that all child-welfare decision makers consider the impact of the residential school experience on children and their caregivers.

<sup>3</sup> *Honouring the Truth, Reconciling for the Future: Summary of the final report of the Truth and Reconciliation of Canada*, Truth and Reconciliation Commission, 2015, [https://ehprnh2mwo3.exactdn.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Executive\\_Summary\\_English\\_Web.pdf](https://ehprnh2mwo3.exactdn.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Executive_Summary_English_Web.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

2. We call upon the federal government, in collaboration with the provinces and territories, to prepare and publish annual reports on the number of Aboriginal children (First Nations, Inuit, and Métis) who are in care, compared with non-Aboriginal children, as well as the reasons for apprehension, the total spending on preventive and care services by child-welfare agencies, and the effectiveness of various interventions.
3. We call upon all levels of government to fully implement Jordan's Principle.
4. We call upon the federal government to enact Aboriginal child-welfare legislation that establishes national standards for Aboriginal child apprehension and custody cases and includes principles that:
  - i. Affirm the right of Aboriginal governments to establish and maintain their own child-welfare agencies.
  - ii. Require all child-welfare agencies and courts to take the residential school legacy into account in their decision making.
  - iii. Establish, as an important priority, a requirement that placements of Aboriginal children into temporary and permanent care be culturally appropriate.
5. We call upon the federal, provincial, territorial, and Aboriginal governments to develop culturally appropriate parenting programs for Aboriginal families.

## **EDUCATION**

6. We call upon the Government of Canada to repeal Section 43 of the Criminal Code of Canada.
7. We call upon the federal government to develop with Aboriginal groups a joint strategy to eliminate educational and employment gaps between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Canadians.
8. We call upon the federal government to eliminate the discrepancy in federal education funding for First Nations children being educated on reserves and those First Nations children being educated off reserves.
9. We call upon the federal government to prepare and publish annual reports comparing funding for the education of First Nations children on and off reserves, as well as educational and income attainments of Aboriginal peoples in Canada compared with non-Aboriginal people.
10. We call on the federal government to draft new Aboriginal education legislation with the full participation and informed consent of Aboriginal peoples. The new legislation would include a commitment to sufficient funding and would incorporate the following principles:
  - i. Providing sufficient funding to close identified educational achievement gaps within one generation.
  - ii. Improving education attainment levels and success rates.
  - iii. Developing culturally appropriate curricula.
  - iv. Protecting the right to Aboriginal languages, including the teaching of Aboriginal languages as credit courses.
  - v. Enabling parental and community responsibility, control, and accountability, similar to what parents enjoy in public school systems.
  - vi. Enabling parents to fully participate in the education of their children.
  - vii. Respecting and honouring Treaty relationships.
11. We call upon the federal government to provide adequate funding to end the backlog of First Nations students seeking a post-secondary education.
12. We call upon the federal, provincial, territorial, and Aboriginal governments to develop culturally appropriate early childhood education programs for Aboriginal families.



## **LANGUAGE AND CULTURE**

13. We call upon the federal government to acknowledge that Aboriginal rights include Aboriginal language rights.

14. We call upon the federal government to enact an Aboriginal Languages Act that incorporates the following principles:

- i. Aboriginal languages are a fundamental and valued element of Canadian culture and society, and there is an urgency to preserve them.
- ii. Aboriginal language rights are reinforced by the Treaties.
- iii. The federal government has a responsibility to provide sufficient funds for Aboriginal-language revitalization and preservation.
- iv. The preservation, revitalization, and strengthening of Aboriginal languages and cultures are best managed by Aboriginal people and communities.
- v. Funding for Aboriginal language initiatives must reflect the diversity of Aboriginal languages.

15. We call upon the federal government to appoint, in consultation with Aboriginal groups, an Aboriginal Languages Commissioner. The commissioner should help promote Aboriginal languages and report on the adequacy of federal funding of Aboriginal-language initiatives.

16. We call upon post-secondary institutions to create university and college degree and diploma programs in Aboriginal languages.

17. We call upon all levels of government to enable residential school Survivors and their families to reclaim names changed by the residential school system by waiving administrative costs for a period of five years for the name-change process and the revision of official identity documents, such as birth certificates, passports, driver's licenses, health cards, status cards, and social insurance numbers.

## **HEALTH**

18. We call upon the federal, provincial, territorial, and Aboriginal governments to acknowledge that the current state of Aboriginal health in Canada is a direct result of previous Canadian government policies, including residential schools, and to recognize and implement the health-care rights of Aboriginal people as identified in international law, constitutional law, and under the Treaties.

19. We call upon the federal government, in consultation with Aboriginal peoples, to establish measurable goals to identify and close the gaps in health outcomes between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal communities, and to publish annual progress reports and assess longterm trends. Such efforts would focus on indicators such as: infant mortality, maternal health, suicide, mental health, addictions, life expectancy, birth rates, infant and child health issues, chronic diseases, illness and injury incidence, and the availability of appropriate health services.

20. In order to address the jurisdictional disputes concerning Aboriginal people who do not reside on reserves, we call upon the federal government to recognize, respect, and address the distinct health needs of the Métis, Inuit, and off-reserve Aboriginal peoples.

21. We call upon the federal government to provide sustainable funding for existing and new Aboriginal healing centres to address the physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual harms caused by residential schools, and to ensure that the funding of healing centres in Nunavut and the Northwest Territories is a priority

22. We call upon those who can effect change within the Canadian health-care system to recognize the value of Aboriginal healing practices and use them in the treatment of Aboriginal patients in collaboration with Aboriginal healers and Elders where requested by Aboriginal patients.

23. We call upon all levels of government to:

- i. Increase the number of Aboriginal professionals working in the health-care field.
- ii. Ensure the retention of Aboriginal health-care providers in Aboriginal communities.
- iii. Provide cultural competency training for all healthcare professionals.

24. We call upon medical and nursing schools in Canada to require all students to take a course dealing with Aboriginal health issues, including the history and legacy of residential schools, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, Treaties and Aboriginal rights, and Indigenous teachings and practices. This will require skills-based training in intercultural competency, conflict resolution, human rights, and anti-racism.

## **JUSTICE**

25. We call upon the federal government to establish a written policy that reaffirms the independence of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police to investigate crimes in which the government has its own interest as a potential or real party in civil litigation.

26. We call upon the federal, provincial, and territorial governments to review and amend their respective statutes of limitations to ensure that they conform to the principle that governments and other entities cannot rely on limitation defences to defend legal actions of historical abuse brought by Aboriginal people.

27. We call upon the Federation of Law Societies of Canada to ensure that lawyers receive appropriate cultural competency training, which includes the history and legacy of residential schools, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, Treaties and Aboriginal rights, Indigenous law, and Aboriginal-Crown relations. This will require skills-based training in intercultural competency, conflict resolution, human rights, and anti-racism.

28. We call upon law schools in Canada to require all law students to take a course in Aboriginal people and the law, which includes the history and legacy of residential schools, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, Treaties and Aboriginal rights, Indigenous law, and Aboriginal–Crown relations. This will require skills-based training in intercultural competency, conflict resolution, human rights, and antiracism.

29. We call upon the parties and, in particular, the federal government, to work collaboratively with plaintiffs not included in the Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement to have disputed legal issues determined expeditiously on an agreed set of facts.

30. We call upon federal, provincial, and territorial governments to commit to eliminating the overrepresentation of Aboriginal people in custody over the next decade, and to issue detailed annual reports that monitor and evaluate progress in doing so.

31. We call upon the federal, provincial, and territorial governments to provide sufficient and stable funding to implement and evaluate community sanctions that will provide realistic alternatives to imprisonment for Aboriginal offenders and respond to the underlying causes of offending.

32. We call upon the federal government to amend the Criminal Code to allow trial judges, upon giving reasons, to depart from mandatory minimum sentences and restrictions on the use of conditional sentences.
33. We call upon the federal, provincial, and territorial governments to recognize as a high priority the need to address and prevent Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD), and to develop, in collaboration with Aboriginal people, FASD preventive programs that can be delivered in a culturally appropriate manner.
34. We call upon the governments of Canada, the provinces, and territories to undertake reforms to the criminal justice system to better address the needs of offenders with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD), including:
- i. Providing increased community resources and powers for courts to ensure that FASD is properly diagnosed, and that appropriate community supports are in place for those with FASD.
  - ii. Enacting statutory exemptions from mandatory minimum sentences of imprisonment for offenders affected by FASD.
  - iii. Providing community, correctional, and parole resources to maximize the ability of people with FASD to live in the community.
  - iv. Adopting appropriate evaluation mechanisms to measure the effectiveness of such programs and ensure community safety.
35. We call upon the federal government to eliminate barriers to the creation of additional Aboriginal healing lodges within the federal correctional system.
36. We call upon the federal, provincial, and territorial governments to work with Aboriginal communities to provide culturally relevant services to inmates on issues such as substance abuse, family and domestic violence, and overcoming the experience of having been sexually abused.
37. We call upon the federal government to provide more supports for Aboriginal programming in halfway houses and parole services.
38. We call upon the federal, provincial, territorial, and Aboriginal governments to commit to eliminating the overrepresentation of Aboriginal youth in custody over the next decade.
39. We call upon the federal government to develop a national plan to collect and publish data on the criminal victimization of Aboriginal people, including data related to homicide and family violence victimization.
40. We call on all levels of government, in collaboration with Aboriginal people, to create adequately funded and accessible Aboriginal-specific victim programs and services with appropriate evaluation mechanisms.
41. We call upon the federal government, in consultation with Aboriginal organizations, to appoint a public inquiry into the causes of, and remedies for, the disproportionate victimization of Aboriginal women and girls. The inquiry's mandate would include:
- i. Investigation into missing and murdered Aboriginal women and girls.
  - ii. Links to the intergenerational legacy of residential schools.
42. We call upon the federal, provincial, and territorial governments to commit to the recognition and implementation of Aboriginal justice systems in a manner consistent with the Treaty and Aboriginal rights of Aboriginal peoples, the *Constitution Act*, 1982, and the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*, endorsed by Canada in November 2012.

# Reconciliation

## CANADIAN GOVERNMENTS &

### *THE UNITED NATIONS DECLARATION ON THE RIGHTS OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLE*

43. We call upon federal, provincial, territorial, and municipal governments to fully adopt and implement the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* as the framework for reconciliation.

44. We call upon the Government of Canada to develop a national action plan, strategies, and other concrete measures to achieve the goals of the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*.

## ROYAL PROCLAMATION AND COVENANT OF RECONCILIATION

45. We call upon the Government of Canada, on behalf of all Canadians, to jointly develop with Aboriginal peoples a Royal Proclamation of Reconciliation to be issued by the Crown. The proclamation would build on the Royal Proclamation of 1763 and the Treaty of Niagara of 1764, and reaffirm the nation-to-nation relationship between Aboriginal peoples and the Crown. The proclamation would include, but not be limited to, the following commitments:

- i. Repudiate concepts used to justify European sovereignty over Indigenous lands and peoples such as the Doctrine of Discovery and terra nullius.
- ii. Adopt and implement the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* as the framework for reconciliation.
- iii. Renew or establish Treaty relationships based on principles of mutual recognition, mutual respect, and shared responsibility for maintaining those relationships into the future.
- iv. Reconcile Aboriginal and Crown constitutional and legal orders to ensure that Aboriginal peoples are full partners in Confederation, including the recognition and integration of Indigenous laws and legal traditions in negotiation and implementation processes involving Treaties, land claims, and other constructive agreements.

46. We call upon the parties to the Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement to develop and sign a Covenant of Reconciliation that would identify principles for working collaboratively to advance reconciliation in Canadian society, and that would include, but not be limited to:

- i. Reaffirmation of the parties' commitment to reconciliation.
- ii. Repudiation of concepts used to justify European sovereignty over Indigenous lands and peoples, such as the Doctrine of Discovery and terra nullius, and the reformation of laws, governance structures, and policies within their respective institutions that continue to rely on such concepts.
- iii. Full adoption and implementation of the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* as the framework for reconciliation.
- iv. Support for the renewal or establishment of Treaty relationships based on principles of mutual recognition, mutual respect, and shared responsibility for maintaining those relationships into the future.
- v. Enabling those excluded from the Settlement Agreement to sign onto the Covenant of Reconciliation.
- vi. Enabling additional parties to sign onto the Covenant of Reconciliation.

47. We call upon federal, provincial, territorial, and municipal governments to repudiate concepts used to justify European sovereignty over Indigenous peoples and lands, such as the Doctrine of Discovery and *terra nullius*, and to reform those laws, government policies, and litigation strategies that continue to rely on such concepts.

### **SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT PARTIES & *THE UNITED NATIONS DECLARATION ON THE RIGHTS OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES***

48. We call upon the church parties to the Settlement Agreement, and all other faith groups and interfaith social justice groups in Canada who have not already done so, to formally adopt and comply with the principles, norms, and standards of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples as a framework for reconciliation. This would include, but not be limited to, the following commitments:

- i. Ensuring that their institutions, policies, programs, and practices comply with the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*.
- ii. Respecting Indigenous peoples' right to self-determination in spiritual matters, including the right to practise, develop, and teach their own spiritual and religious traditions, customs, and ceremonies, consistent with Article 12:1 of the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*.
- iii. Engaging in ongoing public dialogue and actions to support the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*.
- iv. Issuing a statement no later than March 31, 2016, from all religious denominations and faith groups, as to how they will implement the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*.

49. We call upon all religious denominations and faith groups who have not already done so to repudiate concepts used to justify European sovereignty over Indigenous lands and peoples, such as the Doctrine of Discovery and *terra nullius*.

### **EQUITY FOR ABORIGINAL PEOPLE IN THE LEGAL SYSTEM**

50. In keeping with the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*, we call upon the federal government, in collaboration with Aboriginal organizations, to fund the establishment of Indigenous law institutes for the development, use, and understanding of Indigenous laws and access to justice in accordance with the unique cultures of Aboriginal peoples in Canada.

51. We call upon the Government of Canada, as an obligation of its fiduciary responsibility, to develop a policy of transparency by publishing legal opinions it develops and upon which it acts or intends to act, in regard to the scope and extent of Aboriginal and Treaty rights.

52. We call upon the Government of Canada, provincial and territorial governments, and the courts to adopt the following legal principles:

- i. Aboriginal title claims are accepted once the Aboriginal claimant has established occupation over a particular territory at a particular point in time.
- ii. Once Aboriginal title has been established, the burden of proving any limitation on any rights arising from the existence of that title shifts to the party asserting such a limitation.

## NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR RECONCILIATION

53. We call upon the Parliament of Canada, in consultation and collaboration with Aboriginal peoples, to enact legislation to establish a National Council for Reconciliation. The legislation would establish the council as an independent, national, oversight body with membership jointly appointed by the Government of Canada and national Aboriginal organizations, and consisting of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal members. Its mandate would include, but not be limited to, the following:

- i. Monitor, evaluate, and report annually to Parliament and the people of Canada on the Government of Canada's post-apology progress on reconciliation to ensure that government accountability for reconciling the relationship between Aboriginal peoples and the Crown is maintained in the coming years.
- ii. Monitor, evaluate, and report to Parliament and the people of Canada on reconciliation progress across all levels and sectors of Canadian society, including the implementation of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's Calls to Action.
- iii. Develop and implement a multi-year National Action Plan for Reconciliation, which includes research and policy development, public education programs, and resources.
- iv. Promote public dialogue, public/private partnerships, and public initiatives for reconciliation.

54. We call upon the Government of Canada to provide multi-year funding for the National Council for Reconciliation to ensure that it has the financial, human, and technical resources required to conduct its work, including the endowment of a National Reconciliation Trust to advance the cause of reconciliation.

55. We call upon all levels of government to provide annual reports or any current data requested by the National Council for Reconciliation so that it can report on the progress towards reconciliation. The reports or data would include, but not be limited to:

- i. The number of Aboriginal children—including Métis and Inuit children—in care, compared with non-Aboriginal children, the reasons for apprehension, and the total spending on preventive and care services by child-welfare agencies.
- ii. Comparative funding for the education of First Nations children on and off reserves.
- iii. The educational and income attainments of Aboriginal peoples in Canada compared with non-Aboriginal people.
- iv. Progress on closing the gaps between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal communities in a number of health indicators such as: infant mortality, maternal health, suicide, mental health, addictions, life expectancy, birth rates, infant and child health issues, chronic diseases, illness and injury incidence, and the availability of appropriate health services.
- v. Progress on eliminating the overrepresentation of Aboriginal children in youth custody over the next decade.
- vi. Progress on reducing the rate of criminal victimization of Aboriginal people, including data related to homicide and family violence victimization and other crimes.
- vii. Progress on reducing the overrepresentation of Aboriginal people in the justice and correctional systems.

56. We call upon the prime minister of Canada to formally respond to the report of the National Council for Reconciliation by issuing an annual "State of Aboriginal Peoples" report, which would outline the government's plans for advancing the cause of reconciliation.

## **PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING FOR PUBLIC SERVANTS**

57. We call upon federal, provincial, territorial, and municipal governments to provide education to public servants on the history of Aboriginal peoples, including the history and legacy of residential schools, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, Treaties and Aboriginal rights, Indigenous law, and Aboriginal–Crown relations. This will require skillsbased training in intercultural competency, conflict resolution, human rights, and anti-racism.

## **CHURCH APOLOGIES AND RECONCILIATION**

58. We call upon the Pope to issue an apology to Survivors, their families, and communities for the Roman Catholic Church’s role in the spiritual, cultural, emotional, physical, and sexual abuse of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis children in Catholic-run residential schools. We call for that apology to be similar to the 2010 apology issued to Irish victims of abuse and to occur within one year of the issuing of this Report and to be delivered by the Pope in Canada.

59. We call upon church parties to the Settlement Agreement to develop ongoing education strategies to ensure that their respective congregations learn about their church’s role in colonization, the history and legacy of residential schools, and why apologies to former residential school students, their families, and communities were necessary.

60. We call upon leaders of the church parties to the Settlement Agreement and all other faiths, in collaboration with Indigenous spiritual leaders, Survivors, schools of theology, seminaries, and other religious training centres, to develop and teach curriculum for all student clergy, and all clergy and staff who work in Aboriginal communities, on the need to respect Indigenous spirituality in its own right, the history and legacy of residential schools and the roles of the church parties in that system, the history and legacy of religious conflict in Aboriginal families and communities, and the responsibility that churches have to mitigate such conflicts and prevent spiritual violence.

61. We call upon church parties to the Settlement Agreement, in collaboration with Survivors and representatives of Aboriginal organizations, to establish permanent funding to Aboriginal people for:

- i. Community-controlled healing and reconciliation projects.
- ii. Community-controlled culture- and language revitalization projects.
- iii. Community-controlled education and relationshipbuilding projects.
- iv. Regional dialogues for Indigenous spiritual leaders and youth to discuss Indigenous spirituality, self determination, and reconciliation.

## **EDUCATION FOR RECONCILIATION**

62. We call upon the federal, provincial, and territorial governments, in consultation and collaboration with Survivors, Aboriginal peoples, and educators, to:

- i. Make age-appropriate curriculum on residential schools, Treaties, and Aboriginal peoples’ historical and contemporary contributions to Canada a mandatory education requirement for Kindergarten to Grade Twelve students.
- ii. Provide the necessary funding to post-secondary institutions to educate teachers on how to integrate Indigenous knowledge and teaching methods into classrooms.

- iii. Provide the necessary funding to Aboriginal schools to utilize Indigenous knowledge and teaching methods in classrooms.
- iv. Establish senior-level positions in government at the assistant deputy minister level or higher dedicated to Aboriginal content in education.

63. We call upon the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada to maintain an annual commitment to Aboriginal education issues, including:

- i. Developing and implementing Kindergarten to Grade Twelve curriculum and learning resources on Aboriginal peoples in Canadian history, and the history and legacy of residential schools.
- ii. Sharing information and best practices on teaching curriculum related to residential schools and Aboriginal history.
- iii. Building student capacity for intercultural understanding, empathy, and mutual respect.
- iv. Identifying teacher-training needs relating to the above.

64. We call upon all levels of government that provide public funds to denominational schools to require such schools to provide an education on comparative religious studies, which must include a segment on Aboriginal spiritual beliefs and practices developed in collaboration with Aboriginal Elders.

65. We call upon the federal government, through the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council, and in collaboration with Aboriginal peoples, post-secondary institutions and educators, and the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation and its partner institutions, to establish a national research program with multi-year funding to advance understanding of reconciliation.

## **YOUTH PROGRAMS**

66. We call upon the federal government to establish multiyear funding for community-based youth organizations to deliver programs on reconciliation, and establish a national network to share information and best practices.

## **MUSEUMS & ARCHIVES**

67. We call upon the federal government to provide funding to the Canadian Museums Association to undertake, in collaboration with Aboriginal peoples, a national review of museum policies and best practices to determine the level of compliance with the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* and to make recommendations.

68. We call upon the federal government, in collaboration with Aboriginal peoples, and the Canadian Museums Association to mark the 150th anniversary of Canadian Confederation in 2017 by establishing a dedicated national funding program for commemoration projects on the theme of reconciliation.

69. We call upon Library and Archives Canada to:

- i. Fully adopt and implement the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* and the United Nations Joint-Orientlicher Principles, as related to Aboriginal peoples' inalienable right to know the truth about what happened and why, with regard to human rights violations committed against them in the residential schools.
- ii. Ensure that its record holdings related to residential schools are accessible to the public.



iii. Commit more resources to its public education materials and programming on residential schools.

70. We call upon the federal government to provide funding to the Canadian Association of Archivists to undertake, in collaboration with Aboriginal peoples, a national review of archival policies and best practices to:

- i. Determine the level of compliance with the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and the United Nations Joint-Orontlicher Principles, as related to Aboriginal peoples' inalienable right to know the truth about what happened and why, with regard to human rights violations committed against them in the residential schools.
- ii. Produce a report with recommendations for full implementation of these international mechanisms as a reconciliation framework for Canadian archives.

## **MISSING CHILDREN AND BURIAL INFORMATION**

71. We call upon all chief coroners and provincial vital statistics agencies that have not provided to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada their records on the deaths of Aboriginal children in the care of residential school authorities to make these documents available to the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation.

72. We call upon the federal government to allocate sufficient resources to the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation to allow it to develop and maintain the National Residential School Student Death Register established by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada.

73. We call upon the federal government to work with churches, Aboriginal communities, and former residential school students to establish and maintain an online registry of residential school cemeteries, including, where possible, plot maps showing the location of deceased residential school children.

74. We call upon the federal government to work with the churches and Aboriginal community leaders to inform the families of children who died at residential schools of the child's burial location, and to respond to families' wishes for appropriate commemoration ceremonies and markers, and reburial in home communities where requested.

75. We call upon the federal government to work with provincial, territorial, and municipal governments, churches, Aboriginal communities, former residential school students, and current landowners to develop and implement strategies and procedures for the ongoing identification, documentation, maintenance, commemoration, and protection of residential school cemeteries or other sites at which residential school children were buried. This is to include the provision of appropriate memorial ceremonies and commemorative markers to honour the deceased children.

76. We call upon the parties engaged in the work of documenting, maintaining, commemorating, and protecting residential school cemeteries to adopt strategies in accordance with the following principles:

- i. The Aboriginal community most affected shall lead the development of such strategies.
- ii. Information shall be sought from residential school Survivors and other Knowledge Keepers in the development of such strategies.
- iii. Aboriginal protocols shall be respected before any potentially invasive technical inspection and investigation of a cemetery site.

## **NATIONAL CENTRE FOR TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION**

77. We call upon provincial, territorial, municipal, and community archives to work collaboratively with the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation to identify and collect copies of all records relevant to the history and legacy of the residential school system, and to provide these to the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation.

78. We call upon the Government of Canada to commit to making a funding contribution of \$10 million over seven years to the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation, plus an additional amount to assist communities to research and produce histories of their own residential school experience and their involvement in truth, healing, and reconciliation.

## **COMMEMORATION**

79. We call upon the federal government, in collaboration with Survivors, Aboriginal organizations, and the arts community, to develop a reconciliation framework for Canadian heritage and commemoration. This would include, but not be limited to:

- i. Amending the Historic Sites and Monuments Act to include First Nations, Inuit, and Métis representation on the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada and its Secretariat.
- ii. Revising the policies, criteria, and practices of the National Program of Historical Commemoration to integrate Indigenous history, heritage values, and memory practices into Canada's national heritage and history.
- iii. Developing and implementing a national heritage plan and strategy for commemorating residential school sites, the history and legacy of residential schools, and the contributions of Aboriginal peoples to Canada's history.

80. We call upon the federal government, in collaboration with Aboriginal peoples, to establish, as a statutory holiday, a National Day for Truth and Reconciliation to honour Survivors, their families, and communities, and ensure that public commemoration of the history and legacy of residential schools remains a vital component of the reconciliation process.

81. We call upon the federal government, in collaboration with Survivors and their organizations, and other parties to the Settlement Agreement, to commission and install a publicly accessible, highly visible, Residential Schools National Monument in the city of Ottawa to honour Survivors and all the children who were lost to their families and communities.

82. We call upon provincial and territorial governments, in collaboration with Survivors and their organizations, and other parties to the Settlement Agreement, to commission and install a publicly accessible, highly visible, Residential Schools Monument in each capital city to honour Survivors and all the children who were lost to their families and communities.

83. We call upon the Canada Council for the Arts to establish, as a funding priority, a strategy for Indigenous and non-Indigenous artists to undertake collaborative projects and produce works that contribute to the reconciliation process.

## **MEDIA AND RECONCILIATION**

84. We call upon the federal government to restore and increase funding to the CBC/Radio-Canada,

to enable Canada's national public broadcaster to support reconciliation, and be properly reflective of the diverse cultures, languages, and perspectives of Aboriginal peoples, including, but not limited to:

- i. Increasing Aboriginal programming, including Aboriginal-language speakers.
- ii. Increasing equitable access for Aboriginal peoples to jobs, leadership positions, and professional development opportunities within the organization.
- iii. Continuing to provide dedicated news coverage and online public information resources on issues of concern to Aboriginal peoples and all Canadians, including the history and legacy of residential schools and the reconciliation process.

85. We call upon the Aboriginal Peoples Television Network, as an independent non-profit broadcaster with programming by, for, and about Aboriginal peoples, to support reconciliation, including but not limited to:

- i. Continuing to provide leadership in programming and organizational culture that reflects the diverse cultures, languages, and perspectives of Aboriginal peoples.
- ii. Continuing to develop media initiatives that inform and educate the Canadian public, and connect Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Canadians.

86. We call upon Canadian journalism programs and media schools to require education for all students on the history of Aboriginal peoples, including the history and legacy of residential schools, the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*, Treaties and Aboriginal rights, Indigenous law, and Aboriginal-Crown relations.

## **SPORTS AND RECONCILIATION**

87. We call upon all levels of government, in collaboration with Aboriginal peoples, sports halls of fame, and other relevant organizations, to provide public education that tells the national story of Aboriginal athletes in history.

88. We call upon all levels of government to take action to ensure long-term Aboriginal athlete development and growth, and continued support for the North American Indigenous Games, including funding to host the games and for provincial and territorial team preparation and travel.

89. We call upon the federal government to amend the Physical Activity and Sport Act to support reconciliation by ensuring that policies to promote physical activity as a fundamental element of health and well-being, reduce barriers to sports participation, increase the pursuit of excellence in sport, and build capacity in the Canadian sport system, are inclusive of Aboriginal peoples.

90. We call upon the federal government to ensure that national sports policies, programs, and initiatives are inclusive of Aboriginal peoples, including, but not limited to, establishing:

- i. In collaboration with provincial and territorial governments, stable funding for, and access to, community sports programs that reflect the diverse cultures and traditional sporting activities of Aboriginal peoples.
- ii. An elite athlete development program for Aboriginal athletes.
- iii. Programs for coaches, trainers, and sports officials that are culturally relevant for Aboriginal peoples.
- iv. Anti-racism awareness and training programs.

91. We call upon the officials and host countries of international sporting events such as the Olympics, Pan Am, and Commonwealth games to ensure that Indigenous peoples' territorial protocols are respected, and local Indigenous communities are engaged in all aspects of planning and participating in such events.

## **BUSINESS AND RECONCILIATION**

92. We call upon the corporate sector in Canada to adopt the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* as a reconciliation framework and to apply its principles, norms, and standards to corporate policy and core operational activities involving Indigenous peoples and their lands and resources. This would include, but not be limited to, the following:

- i. Commit to meaningful consultation, building respectful relationships, and obtaining the free, prior, and informed consent of Indigenous peoples before proceeding with economic development projects.
- ii. Ensure that Aboriginal peoples have equitable access to jobs, training, and education opportunities in the corporate sector, and that Aboriginal communities gain long-term sustainable benefits from economic development projects.
- iii. Provide education for management and staff on the history of Aboriginal peoples, including the history and legacy of residential schools, the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*, Treaties and Aboriginal rights, Indigenous law, and Aboriginal–Crown relations. This will require skills based training in intercultural competency, conflict resolution, human rights, and anti-racism.

## **NEWCOMERS TO CANADA**

93. We call upon the federal government, in collaboration with the national Aboriginal organizations, to revise the information kit for newcomers to Canada and its citizenship test to reflect a more inclusive history of the diverse Aboriginal peoples of Canada, including Calls to Action| 11 information about the Treaties and the history of residential schools.

94. We call upon the Government of Canada to replace the Oath of Citizenship with the following: I swear (or affirm) that I will be faithful and bear true allegiance to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, Queen of Canada, Her Heirs and Successors, and that I will faithfully observe the laws of Canada including Treaties with Indigenous Peoples, and fulfill my duties as a Canadian citizen.

For more information about the status of the 94 Calls to Action, CBC News created a website called Beyond 94, where you can read more about each of the calls to action, what they mean, and what is being done or being proposed.

[www.cbc.ca/newsinteractives/beyond-94](http://www.cbc.ca/newsinteractives/beyond-94)

Indigenous Watchdog is another organization closely keeping up with the progress of the 94 Calls to Action.

[www.indigenouswatchdog.org](http://www.indigenouswatchdog.org)

# THINGS YOU CAN DO

The list of actions below come from “150 Acts of Reconciliation, written by Dr. Crystal Gail Fraser and Dr. Sara Komarnisky. The list is also available at [activehistory.ca/150acts](http://activehistory.ca/150acts). Posters are available at [150acts.weebly.com](http://150acts.weebly.com).

1. Learn the land acknowledgement in your region.
2. Find your local reconciliation organization.
3. If there isn't one, consider joining together with others to start one.
4. Attend a cultural event, such as a pow wow (yes, all folks are invited to these!)
5. Purchase an item from an Indigenous artist. For instance, if you are interested in owning a dreamcatcher or a pair of moccasins, find an Indigenous artist who can craft these items for you and provide you with information about these special creations.
6. Download an Indigenous podcast, like Ryan McMahon's *Red Man Laughing* or Molly Swain and Chelsea Vowel's *Métis in Space*.
7. Read an autobiography written by an Indigenous person. A couple of ideas include Augie Merasty's *The Education of Augie Merasty*, Christy Jordan-Fenton and Margaret Pokiak-Fenton's *Fatty Legs: A True Story*, and Mini Adola Freeman's *Life Among the Qallunaat*.
8. Find out if there was a residential school where you live.
9. Memorize its name and visit its former site.
10. Watch CBC's *Eighth Fire*.
11. Choose one plant or flower in your area and learn how Indigenous people use(d) it.
12. Visit your local museum, particularly its section on Indigenous people. If it does not have one, ask the staff why not.
13. Learn a greeting in a local Indigenous language.
14. Register for the University of Alberta's online MOOC, called “Indigenous Canada,” for free.
15. Initiate a conversation with a friend about an Indigenous issue in the news.
16. Support **Black Lives Matter**.
17. Eat at an Indigenous restaurant, café, or food truck.
18. Read about the Cornwallis Statue in Halifax.
19. Seriously consider your own position as a settler Canadian. Do you uphold practices that contribute to the marginalization of Indigenous peoples?
20. Learn why headdresses are not appropriate to wear at music festivals (or outside of Indigenous ceremony).
21. Find a book that delves into Indigenous local histories.
22. Donate to the *Emerging Indigenous Voices* award.
23. Although Gord Downie significantly contributed to the conversation about residential schools, consider why some Indigenous people might not support his project.
24. Visit a local Indigenous writer or artist-in-residence.
25. When discussing LGBTQ issues, always include two-spirited peoples (LGBTQ2S.)
26. Invite your local reconciliation organization to hold a **KAIROS Blanket Exercise** at your place of employment.

# THINGS YOU CAN DO

27. Buy some books for your children that explain the histories and legacies of residential school (see [CBC's](#) list of suggestions.)
28. Ask yourself if stereotypes about Indigenous people align with your beliefs (for more on stereotypes, refer to Chelsea Vowel's *Indigenous Writes* [2016]).
29. Educate yourself around the issue of carding and consider why this is an important issue for urban Indigenous populations.
30. Learn your family history. Know where your ancestors came from and when they arrived in Canada.
31. In addition, understand how your family story is part of a larger system that sought to dispossess Indigenous people from their ancestral lands.
32. Listen more. Talk less.
33. Ask your child's school to give a daily land acknowledgement. If the Canadian national anthem is sung at their school, ask that the acknowledgement come before the anthem.
34. Acknowledge that as a nation, Canadians choose which histories are celebrated and which ones are erased.
35. Learn the difference between Indigenous, Aboriginal, First Nation, Métis, and Inuit.
36. Support local Indigenous authors by purchasing their books.
37. Research why Joseph Boyden is not Indigenous.
38. Watch an educational documentary, such as *We Were Children* or *The Pass System*.
39. Gently counter racist or stereotypical comments with fact-based information whether you are at a party, the office, or the gym.
40. Write your local councilor, MLA, or MP about the flying of Indigenous flags at local, provincial, territorial, or federal buildings.
41. Understand and acknowledge that Canada's first prime minister, Sir John A. Macdonald, was an architect of genocide. Say that aloud with us. "John A. Macdonald was an architect of genocide."
42. Write a letter to your local RCMP Officer in Charge or local Police Chief to inquire about how the police force is actively engaged in fostering connections with local Indigenous communities. If they are not doing so, ask that they start.
43. Show your support on social media. 'Like' pages and 'share' posts that support Indigenous endeavours.
44. Listen to Indigenous music. If you do not know any, listen to [CBC's Reclaimed](#). Or start with an album by Tanya Tagaq or Leonard Sumner.
45. Find the Indigenous section at your local library.
46. Read the TRC. Seriously. Start with the Calls to Action, then the Executive Summary. You can even listen to it online at [#ReadtheTRC](#). Better yet, invite your friends or colleagues to read it with you.
47. Go and see Indigenous scholars and intellectuals speak.
48. Hire Indigenous people for positions at your workplace.
49. If you live in an area where there is a Treaty relationship, read the treaty document.
50. Write to your municipal, provincial, and federal representatives and ask them how they are implementing the Calls to Action.

# THINGS YOU CAN DO

51. Follow up with your representatives about the Calls to Action.
52. Read Marilyn Poitras' **reasons for resigning** her Commissioner's position with the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls' Inquiry.
53. Find an organization locally that has upcoming programming where you can learn more. In many areas, this is the Native Friendship Centre.
54. Learn about how the child welfare system is failing Indigenous families. Write a letter to your elected representative asking for change.
55. Remember when Stephen Harper's government sent body bags to the Wasagamack First Nation during the H1N1 influenza outbreak instead of trained medical professionals with vaccines?
56. Did you know there was a separate and inferior health care system for Indigenous peoples? Read Maureen Lux's book, *Separate Beds* (2016).
57. Be aware that Indigenous people were restricted from voting in federal elections until 1960.
58. Do you have access to clean drinking water? You are lucky. Also, 'luck' really has nothing to do with it; these conditions were historically engineered.
59. In a country that is 'safe,' such as Canada, **57%** of Indigenous women are sexually assaulted during their lifetimes.
60. Recall that First Nations people were forced to choose between maintaining their Status under the Indian Act and going to university or serving in the armed forces, and women lost their status by marrying a non-Indigenous person.
61. Find out who was forced out of your area before you moved there, whether centuries ago or more recently with new housing developments.
62. Imagine living for six weeks on a hunger strike, with no sustenance but broth. To get a meeting with the prime minister. Hello, Chief Theresa Spence.
63. Write to Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and ask that the government implement the **promises** he made to Indigenous people in the 2015 election.
64. Does your child have a school nearby? Realize that it receives better funding than on-reserve schools. By at least **30%**.
65. Actively seek out Indigenous heroes and role models. How about **Dr. Nadine Caron**, the first First Nations woman to become a surgeon? Or Mohawk athlete **Waneek Horn-Miller**? Or a historical figure, such as **Thanadelthur**?
66. Do you have an Indigenous political candidate in your area? Even though they might not be affiliated with your political party of choice, phone or email them and start a conversation.
67. Find out: Who was the last Indigenous person to win the Polaris Prize?
68. Support the rights of Indigenous nations to exercise their sovereignty. For example, learn about the Haudenosaunee Confederacy **passport**.
69. Recognize that Indigenous legal orders and laws guiding society existed in this land before the authority of the Canadian nation state.
70. When travelling, know whose land you are visiting while on vacation or travelling for work.

# THINGS YOU CAN DO

71. Do more than google.
72. If you are talking about or researching Indigenous peoples, have you included any of their voices?
73. Support Indigenous parents by learning the issues that they are faced with, which are often scenarios that settler Canadians take for granted. For instance, the use of Indigenous names on government documents and how that can be **problematic**. But also how these ‘issues’ can be **resolved** by speaking out!
74. Support **#NODAPL**.
75. Yes, this all might seem scary! Keep going, if you are committed.
76. Acknowledge that current (and sometimes vexed) First Nations politics are governed by the Indian Act.
77. Learn about why the opinions of Senator Lynn Beyak are **problematic**.
78. Consider the diverse family forms that existed here before settlers arrived. This included strong matrilineal families in various forms, such as polyamorous relations.
79. Did you know that in the **Northwest Territories** and **Nunavut**, territorial law acknowledges Indigenous custom adoptions?
80. Write **Robert-Falcon Ouellette** a letter of support for speaking Cree in the House of Commons.
81. 2017 was the twenty-seventh anniversary of the so-called ‘Oka Crisis.’ What do you know about it?
82. Ever wonder why only English and French are Canada’s official languages when there are at least sixty Indigenous languages in this land? Dig deeper into this.
83. Read about the **Daniels Decision** and why it is important.
84. Learn about Chanie Wenjack’s story by watching this **Heritage Minute**. Know that his story was shared by thousands of other Indigenous children.
85. Remember that good intentions can be harmful too.
86. Did you know that Indigenous peoples had sophisticated ways of caring for our landscapes to prevent massive fires, floods, and other natural disasters? Learn more about these methods.
87. That fish you are going to catch during this long weekend? Learn the Indigenous word for it and local teachings about it.
88. Did you know that two remarkably successful Hollywood films included Indigenous actors? Watch *The Revenant*’s Melaw Nakeh’ko and *Wonder Woman*’s Eugene Brave Rock!
89. Watch Alethea Arnaquq-Baril’s ***Angry Inuk***.
90. Hold businesses accountable to your personal ethics and ideologies.
91. Do not assume that you are entitled to attend a local sweat or other spiritual ceremony.
92. BUT if you are invited to ceremony – definitely go. This is an honour!
93. If you actually want to see the relationship between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people change, commit to making reconciliation a part of your every-day ethos.
94. When visiting a museum, do so critically. Ask who tells the story, how that item got there, and what processes are in place around repatriation.
95. Consider the line between cultural appropriation and cultural appreciation. Chelsea Vowel has a good **blogpost** about this.



# THINGS YOU CAN DO

96. Follow [@Resistance150](#) on Twitter and learn why Canada 150 was not something to celebrate for many Indigenous peoples. After all, Canada does not celebrate the fact that Indigenous Nations have existed in this land since Time Immemorial.
97. Observe what is celebrated and recognized in the monuments, parks, and street names in your city. Think about how public history could be told [differently](#).
98. Learn the original names of places. Learn what places were and are important to Indigenous people.
99. Discover the world of Indigenous blogging. [Zoe Todd](#), [Erica Violet Lee](#), [Billy-Ray Belcourt](#), and [Chelsea Vowel](#) are among the best.
100. Consider the words that you use. For example, do not call your group of friends a “tribe,” describe a meeting as a “pow-wow,” or call a non-Indigenous leader “Chief.”
101. Learn the stories behind some of your favourite music. For example, read about how [Lillian Shirt’s](#) grandmother may have inspired the song “Imagine” by John Lennon.
102. Visit the website of the nearest First Nation(s) or Indigenous communities. Read their short introduction and history
103. Find opportunities to learn about how Indigenous people experience the place where you live. Look for a local speaker’s series or an online resource.
104. Volunteer your time to an Indigenous non-profit organization.
105. Support Indigenous media (newspapers, radio stations, social media sites, and TV stations).
106. If you read a news story that feeds into stereotypes, write a letter to complain and ask for Indigenous perspectives on local, national, and international news.
107. Read the [United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples](#). Our government has committed to implementing it.
108. Read the [Indian Act](#).
109. Read the report on the [Royal Commission of Aboriginal Peoples](#).
110. Is there any public art by Indigenous artists in your area? If so, visit it and learn about the artists.
111. Read [In This Together: Fifteen True Stories of Real Reconciliation](#) (2016) and write down your own “lightbulb” moment when you realized the harsh reality of colonization in Canada.
112. Make reconciliation a family project and complete items on this list together. Bring your children to events, learn words in an Indigenous language together, and organize a youth blanket exercise, for example.
113. Start your own [Heart Garden](#) with messages of support for residential school survivors
114. Start to learn and understand cultural protocol. Know this will change according to Indigenous nation and region.
115. Commit to being a lifelong student beyond Canada 150.
116. Look up and learn about an Indigenous athlete. We have NHL players and Olympians among the mix!
117. The Bering Land bridge is one way of telling migration history. But Indigenous people have their own explanation of ancient histories and that needs to be respected. Read about these conversations [here](#) and [here](#).

# THINGS YOU CAN DO

118. Share this list on social media.
119. Look for and share the positive stories about Indigenous people, not just the negative ones.
120. Invite local Indigenous people in to your event or organization.
121. Know that when you are inviting an Indigenous person in, they are often overburdened and overworked.
122. Give an honorarium if you expect an Indigenous person to contribute their time and effort.
123. Cite Indigenous authors and academics in your work.
124. Consider using Indigenous research methodologies in your work. Linda Tuhiwai Smith's *Decolonizing Methodologies* (1999) is the singular most important book for this.
125. Want to incorporate Indigenous elements or policies into your workplace? Hire an Indigenous consultant.
126. Ask yourself how to support Indigenous families who have lost loved ones as the Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls unravels.
127. Seek opportunities to collaborate that span forms of both Indigenous knowledge and western knowledge.
128. Update your email signature to reflect the territory you live and work on.
129. Encourage the institution you work for or study at to formally acknowledge the territory.
130. Check out *Remember, Resist, Redraw: A Radical History Poster Project*. Find more about the project [here](#) and support the cause [here](#).
131. Make a financial donation to a local Indigenous organization.
132. Get behind the initiatives to rename Langevin Block and Ryerson University and learn why this is important.
133. Get behind the initiatives to rename Langevin Block and Ryerson University and learn why this is important.
134. Support and celebrate the persistence of land-based economies, such as the seal hunt.
135. Read fiction by Indigenous authors. A good place to start is the most recent copy of *The Malahat Review*, which you can read online for free, [here](#).
136. If you own property, revisit the documents that gave you 'title' to your land. Think about who has the authority to grant this title and who does not.
137. Order a "Colonialism 150" t-shirt [here](#).
138. Next time you want to talk to an Indigenous person about their background, try your best not to frame the discussion in terms of blood quantum (i.e. how "much" Indigenous or white blood they have). Instead, ask what community they belong to and learn the name of their people.
139. Actively commit to eliminating stereotypes about Indigenous identities by gently correcting people. For instance, being "mixed blood" does not make one Métis.
140. Make a financial or in-kind contribution to the [National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation](#).
141. Contact your alma mater and inquire about the number of Indigenous people on the Board of Governors or the Senate.

# THINGS YOU CAN DO

142. Check out some of the videos by the [1491s](#) for a laugh.
143. Visit [Walking With Our Sisters](#) website and discover if they are coming to your region.
144. Read about the story of one missing or murdered Indigenous woman in your region.
145. Memorize her name and learn about her life.
146. Familiarize yourself with Cindy Blackstock's [important work](#).
147. Find out if your local hospital has an [All Nations Healing room](#) or something similar. If not, ask your employer to help fund one.
148. Thank all the amazing aunties, kokums, jijuus, and aagaas! Hai cho'o for your continued guidance and support.
149. Understand that reconciliation is not about "feeling guilty." It is about knowledge, action, and justice.
150. Why stop at 150? After all, Indigenous nations are celebrating millennia on this land. Build on this list or start and share your own.



# DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

The following pages include discussion questions and facts that are intended to prompt meaningful dialogue about the content presented in the exhibition *ReconciliACTIONS*. The questions can be selected, and the vocabulary altered, to suit the appropriate age level.

*What does "reconciliation" mean? Can you think of a time when you had to make up with someone after a disagreement? What did mending the relationship require?*

*What are some things that happened in the past due to the Indian Act that were unfair or hurtful to Indigenous peoples? What are some repercussions of these things that still affect Indigenous communities today?*

*What happened to the buffalo population?*

*How has Indigenous art and storytelling been used to pass down traditions and histories? How does art and storytelling hold importance today and in the future?*

*What is a "treaty," and why were treaties made between Indigenous peoples and the Canadian government? (See page 52 for more information on Treaties). In what ways have the treaties and agreements made NOT been upheld by the Canadian Government?*

*What are unceded territories?*

*What are some ways people can show respect for Indigenous cultures and traditions?*

*What are stereotypes? What are some ways that people can avoid stereotyping, and instead learn more about unique nations and peoples?*

*What is a human right? Why do you think it's important for everyone to have equal opportunities and rights?*

*Can you come up with some ideas on how we can work together to make sure everyone is treated fairly and equally, and to help Indigenous and non-Indigenous people build positive relationships?*

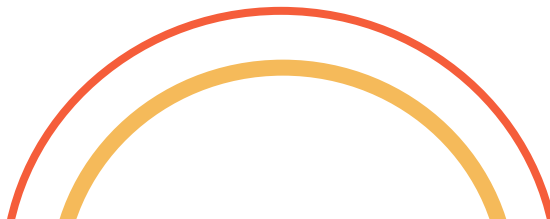
*Why is it important to learn about history from a variety of perspectives? What happens when we only hear a one-sided view of a historical narrative?*

*How can we live in collective care? What can we learn from one another?*

*What does it mean to listen? What does it mean to respond?*

*Does your family or care community practice any spiritual traditions? If so, how do you connect with spirit? What does spirit mean to you?*

*Why is harmony, balance and reciprocity important in life? How do we maintain harmony in life and in our relations?*



## ***What are treaties?***

Treaties are agreements made between the Government of Canada, Indigenous groups and often provinces and territories that define ongoing rights and obligations from all parties involved.

These agreements describe the continuing treaty rights and benefits for each group. Treaty rights and Indigenous rights, are recognized and affirmed in section 35 of the *Constitution Act*, 1982 and are also a key part of the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* which the Government of Canada has committed to adopt.<sup>1</sup>

Treaties with Indigenous peoples include both historic treaties and modern treaties.

The Government of Canada recognizes seventy historic treaties in Canada signed between 1701 and 1923. These treaties include:

*Treaties of Peace and Neutrality* (1701-1760)

*Peace and Friendship Treaties* (1725-1779)

*Upper Canada Land Surrenders and the Williams Treaties* (1764-1862/1923)

*Robinson Treaties and Douglas Treaties* (1850-1854)

*The Numbered Treaties* (1871-1921)

These treaties form the basis of the relationship between the Crown and 364 First Nations, representing over 600,000 First Nations peoples in Canada.<sup>2</sup>

In regards to modern treaties, there are ongoing efforts to support rebuilding and reconstituting Indigenous nations, and to advance self-determination. For First Nations, there are current efforts being made to facilitate the transition away from the *Indian Act* and toward self-government.

Self-government negotiations are one way to work together in partnership toward the goal of Indigenous self-determination, which is a fundamental Indigenous right and principle of international law, as set out in the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*.<sup>3</sup> However, it is important to also note that the efforts being made have been slow, and many of the promises made in these treaties from the government have not been upheld.

***How do you make agreements with friends, family, or other relations? Why is it important that relational agreements are upheld?***

***How do you build trust again, when promises are broken? When it feels like an agreement was made with dishonest intent?***

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1 "Treaties and Agreements," *Government of Canada*, accessed Aug 22, 2023, <https://www.rcaanc-cirnac.gc.ca/eng/1100100028574/1529354437231>

2 Ibid.

3 "Self-Government," *Government of Canada*, accessed August 22, 2023, <https://www.rcaanc-cirnac.gc.ca/eng/1100100032275/1529354547314>

## **A note on treaties and the *Indian Act* from Curator Diana Frost:**

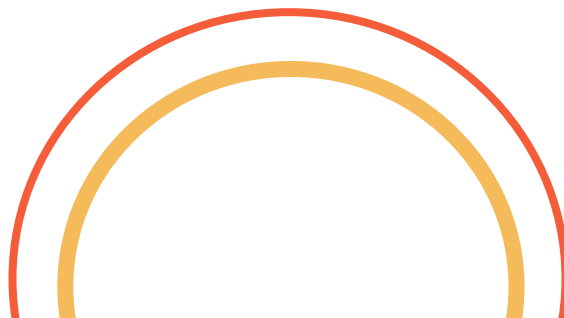
It is important to learn about the treaties but it is also important to learn about how they have not been honoured. I am not an expert on treaties, but I think this is an important thing to include. The Federal government has taken land that was not agreed upon and continually moved Indigenous people to smaller and smaller land parcels, often not the best land for agriculture or hunting or fishing. They did not and have not always provided the services that they had promised in the treaties, and the quality of the services is significantly below the standards provided off-reserve, even today. This includes education, child welfare, water quality, and other sanitary services, housing services, employment services, and more.

Because of the *Indian Act* and the reserve system (much of which is still in place to this day), Indigenous people do not own the land that they live on and they don't own the house that they live in. This means they don't have collateral to get a loan at the bank if they want to start a business or do something important that requires funds. Another critical issue that impacts community development is the disparity in funding provided to education. The funding that reserve schools can access is far less than publicly funded schools off-reserve.

Additionally, many of the chiefs signing the treaties did not speak English and were working through translators, so who knows what was lost in translations... In the last few decades, many bands and nations have taken the federal government to court to fight for compensation for land that was taken without permission and for other treaty related issues. The government also took land and mistreated communities that didn't sign treaties – these lands not covered in treaties are known as unceded territory, and are *not* owned by the Crown, yet the government continually attempts to claim resources and run resource-extraction projects through these lands without recognizing the first people's land claims on these territories.

***Unceded Territory:*** Lands originally belonging to the First People(s) that have not been surrendered or acquired by the Crown. Often refers to lands that are not formally under a treaty; however, there are regions under treaty in Atlantic Canada that encompass lands that have not been surrendered.

Definition sourced from "Indigenous Perspectives Education Guide," *Historica Canada*, p. 3. Accessed Sept 5, 2023. <https://fb.historicacanada.ca/education/english/indigenous-perspectives/2/>



# ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

## SHARING CIRCLES

Sharing circles are used by Indigenous people whenever something important needs to be discussed, and also they are used a great deal to foster healing. Indigenous people have a great deal of trauma to heal from. Intergenerational trauma is common, and refers to trauma that has been passed down from parents and grandparents who went to residential school, were part of the Sixties Scoop, or were forcefully adopted out of their families and into settler families. For reconciliation to be effective, *everyone* (Indigenous and non-Indigenous alike) needs to learn about and recognize the trauma that Indigenous people continue to face, and *we all* need to heal traumas in our own lives through community and reciprocal care in order to build empathy, compassion, and understanding for one another.

A sharing circle facilitator can initiate discussions about what we may rely on each other for, creating a sense of importance in living within a diverse community. We can all help each other.

Admitting weaknesses promotes *humility, bravery* and *honesty*, and *respect, wisdom, truth* and *love* form a circle when equality is established. These qualities, referencing the *Seven Grandfather Teachings*, collectively represent what is needed for community and ecosystemic survival. (Sourced from *Pass the Feather* resource - linked below).

Indigenous peoples have generously shared talking circles with non-Indigenous peoples throughout history, knowing the potential they hold. However, talking circles are often misused and misunderstood by non-Indigenous peoples. **It is important to clarify and share with participants the sacred nature of this tool, to honour and give thanks to Indigenous peoples for sharing this practice, and ensure it is used in a respectful and helpful way.**

To review more guidelines and protocols on how to conduct a sharing circle as a facilitator, visit any of the following links.

- Classroom Circles  
*GEDSB Indigenous Education*, 7 min video  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QHNNQ10VvD0>
- How to Avoid Cultural Appropriation When Practicing Restorative Justice: Talking Circles  
*Walking Raven*, 7 min video  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=\\_DVnAXZMS2Q](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_DVnAXZMS2Q)
- Talking Circles: More than a Technique  
*Global Learning Partners*, Written Resource (Blog)  
<https://www.globallearningpartners.com/blog/talking-circles-more-than-a-technique/>
- Talking Feathers for Sharing and Restorative Justice Circles  
*Pass the Feather*, Written Resource (Blog)  
<https://passthefeather.ca/sharing-circles/?v=3e8d115eb4b3>

A sharing circle can also be facilitated as a preparatory activity, prior to leading participants in the **Beginner Art Lesson** where participants create sun and moon paintings to honour sacred circles, on page 58.

## ***CONVERSATIONS WITH NATURE***

In our modern age, many people have become extremely disconnected from nature. This significantly and detrimentally impacts the ways in which we collectively care for the planet we live on, and it has impacted our connection to each other as well. ***We are all related.*** Humans have languages to communicate, but what is often overlooked is that all living things communicate — just not in the same ways humans do. Indigenous ways of knowing teach that ***all life is connected.*** Within Indigenous communities there is a deeply ingrained respect for Mother Earth, and so Indigenous Ways of Knowing are immersed in a deep respect for the land. Indigenous peoples understand that we are in relation to all of creation and that there is an inherent responsibility to honour the balance between all things. If nature is hurting, we are hurting. If any one group of people is hurting, we are all hurting — as all people are related, all four colours of people are one, and we are not separate from Mother Earth.

For this activity, instruct participants to spend at least half an hour sitting quietly in a natural environment listening to nature's sounds and observing nature's visual qualities and movements. Encourage participants to write down in a journal all their observations about what nature shared with them.

After returning indoors as a group, talk to participants about how we can learn to listen to nature — to the land — and not only to other humans. This can help us to have more balanced conversations about how to take care of Mother Earth and each other — and about how we can be stewards of the land for future generations and stewards of healing for and with each other. See further Indigenous teachings on page 56 about balance and harmony in nature.

*Afterward, ask participants:*

- What did you notice when you spent time listening to the land?
- What did you hear, smell, and/or see?
- Have you ever thought of nature as having its own voice?
- How can we hold space for Earth's voice in our communal discussions about sustainability?
- What else can we learn about sustainability, balance, and harmony from Indigenous knowledge?
- What does nature teach us about healing, reciprocity, and community care?





## ***CONVERSATIONS WITH NATURE (FURTHER TEACHINGS)***

Regarding Mother Earth, Indigenous people had to always have balance with their surroundings because their survival depended on it. If they overhunted the buffalo for example, or destroyed plants too much, they would have nothing to eat for the next seasons.

Indigenous peoples always planned ahead for the next seven generations so they knew where the animals and plants were, where the good water was, and they nurtured and watched over those. Indigenous peoples believe that all nature's elements have a spirit including the rocks, the plants, the people (two legged), the fish (the finned ones), the animals (the four legged), the birds (the winged ones), the creepy crawly ones, the ones you can see, and the ones you cannot see. Aside from all of these, Creator has given us also the four elements as gifts (water, air, fire and earth) that we should be grateful for every day.

*\*These teachings are paraphrased and inspired by Elder John Sinclair's teachings in the Colouring it Forward Cree colouring book.*

Mother Earth is very important, but we also need to build up awareness about the terrible conditions that Indigenous people are living with – because what is hurting Indigenous peoples is hurting us all.

For instance, things like poor education, houses in disrepair, high instances of domestic violence, rape and suicide, high addiction rates with narcotics, alcohol and gambling – these are all symptomatic of much larger systemic issues affecting Indigenous peoples. Completing the Conversations With Nature activity is not enough to enact change, and facilitators and participants alike are encouraged to dive deeper with activities like the KAIROS Blanket Exercise (below).

### ***KAIROS BLANKET EXERCISE (KBE)***

Developed in collaboration with Indigenous Elders, Knowledge Keepers and educators, the KAIROS Blanket Exercise (KBE) is an interactive and experiential teaching tool that explores the historic and contemporary relationship between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples in the land we now know as Canada.

During this two to three-hour workshop, participants step on blankets representing the land and into the role of First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples. They are guided by trained facilitators, including Indigenous Elders and Knowledge Keepers, who work from a script that covers pre-contact, treaty-making, colonization, resistance and much more. The KBE concludes with a debriefing, conducted as a sharing circle, during which participants discuss the learning experience, process their feelings, ask questions, share insights, and deepen their understanding.

Over the past two decades, thousands of KAIROS Blanket Exercises have been delivered in Canada and around the world, including in the United States, Central and South America, Europe, and Australia. By engaging participants on both emotional and intellectual levels, the KBE both educates and creates empathy and understanding. For more information visit <https://www.kairosblanketexercise.org>

## ***INVITE AN INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE KEEPER OR ELDER TO YOUR SCHOOL OR COMMUNITY VENUE***

Once you, your peers, family and friends have had an introduction to Indigenous and settler colonial Canadian history, you will be better equipped to create, plan, and implement action for reconciliation. Learning about this history should *always* include Indigenous voices and it is important to actively seek out education from Indigenous elders and knowledge keepers, ensuring proper protocols are followed in honouring their time and efforts. Often when you ask questions to a knowledge keeper or elder, it is appropriate to offer them tobacco. It can be just a few cigarettes or a small quantity of loose tobacco. Most nations in Alberta and Saskatchewan follow this protocol. It is best to ask to speak to an elder or knowledge keeper's helper about protocol and honoraria.

**Protocols** differ vastly from one Indigenous culture or community to another, and they can be highly complex and multi-layered. Coming to understand and practice protocols appropriately is a lifelong learning process even for Indigenous people growing up within their culture. Following protocols is a significant sign of respect and awareness. It shows that you are taking the time to learn about Indigenous cultures and are challenging the often unconscious bias that everyone should interact in the same way that mainstream settler culture dictates. Through following protocols, you can build stronger relationships with Indigenous communities and learn about different ways of interacting.

As protocols vary widely between and even within Indigenous cultures, they are not something you can learn about by taking a course or reading a list. ***They are learned through relationships.*** Therefore, it is important to find people who you trust to support you as you learn about protocols. There may be people at a local Indigenous friendship centre who can support this – for example, staff at a University office of Indigenous affairs, or a colleague who has established strong, positive relationships with Indigenous partners. You will need to ask questions and be prepared to make mistakes and apologize if needed. It may not always be smooth, but with practice your knowledge will grow.

*The above information about protocols was sourced from BC Campus Open Publishing's Resource "Respecting Protocols"*

<https://opentextbc.ca/indigenizationcurriculumdevelopers/chapter/respecting-protocols/>

Discuss the following potential opportunities to learn with audiences at your venue:

- Invite guest Elders and guest Indigenous instructors to share their stories, wisdom and/or craft.
- Work with the local First Nation(s) to understand the significance of a community cultural piece; fundraise for this cultural piece (i.e. a public collaborative artwork about reconciliation) and ceremony to accompany its raising.
- Establish an Indigenous Committee, Student Council, or student-led club on reconciliation.
- Request mandatory Indigenous representative(s) on student council.
- Acknowledge and honour traditional territories before meetings, events and public gatherings.
- Honour Indigenous culture days to share traditions, knowledge, culture, language, food, games and sport.
- Get funding to hire an Indigenous advisor to review as many procedures and policies as possible and to advise on how to ensure their activities are respectful and inclusive of Indigenous peoples.

# BEGINNER ART LESSON

## SACRED CIRCLE PAINTINGS

- Kindergarten to Grade 3 -

"The circle is a law of creation and the greatest teacher there is. When birds build their nests, they build them round. When bees build their hives, they build them round. When you cut down a tree, you see its rings. When a pebble hits the water, it makes round ripples. That's why the circle becomes a law of the universe. Everything we do, we do in a circle."

— Francis Alexis, Iska - keeper of ancient knowledge,  
Alexis Nakota Sioux Nation <sup>5</sup>

In this activity, participants will honour the teachings of the circle by making a sun or moon paper plate art piece. A facilitator may choose to read the quote above to participants, and should encourage participants to take note of all the artworks in the *ReconciliACTIONS* exhibition that include circles in their artistic compositions — many of the artworks include a sun or a moon.

To further relate the importance of circles and what they symbolize in regards to discussing harmony, care, respect, and acts of reconciliation, learn more about *sharing circles* on page 54.

### Materials:

- Newspaper or a protective surface
- Paper plate
- Acrylic paints (various colours)
- Paintbrushes (various sizes)
- Water and a palette (or a disposable plate)
- Paper towels or a cloth
- Various coloured markers or Sharpies

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<sup>5</sup> Wall text as part of the *Human History Hall*, shared by Francis Alexis (Iska - keeper of ancient knowledge, Alexis Nakota Sioux Nation). Permanent Display. Royal Alberta Museum, Alberta.



## Instructions:

1. Lay down newspaper or a protective surface to prevent paint from getting on your work area. This makes for easier cleanup.
2. Select acrylic paint colors that you'd like to use for your sun or moon. Traditional choices include shades of yellow, orange, and sometimes red or gold for a sun, and shades of blue, purple, grey, or silver for a moon.
3. Select acrylic paint colours you'd like to use to complement the sun or moon.
4. Gather a few coloured sharpies that complement the acrylic paint colours chosen.
5. Begin by painting one small circle, about three inches in diameter, in the center of the paper plate to represent a sun or a moon.

*Note: When switching to a new paint colour, make sure to rinse the paintbrush and wipe it on a paper towel or cloth to remove some of the water before dipping into a new paint colour.*

6. Paint concentric circles directly onto the plate around the sun or moon center. To create concentric circles, start with the innermost circle (the sun or moon) and work your way outward tracing around the edge of each circle with your paintbrush, changing colours for each new circle.
7. Once the paint is dry, you can add visual details with coloured sharpies on top of each of the concentric circles.
8. When the sun or moon circle paintings are complete, participants can opt to hang them individually, or create a group art installation with all the plate paintings together.



# INTERMEDIATE ART LESSON

## HANDS OF ACTION CLAY BOWLS

- Grade 4 to Grade 9 -

The objective of this activity is to introduce participants to the concept of Indigenous reconciliation and inspire them to consider the active role they play in promoting understanding, respect, and harmony between Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities. The lesson is intended to prompt participants to review the tangible actions they can take towards truth and reconciliation, moving beyond "good intentions," and encouraging *active* care and repair. Make a plan of ACTION!

### Preparation

Review the Things You Can Do list on pages 44 through 49, which outlines a variety of tangible actions that can be taken to carry truth and reconciliation forward. Invite participants to choose items on the list that the participants are willing to commit to and which will be used in this art lesson.

### Materials You'll Need:

- Air-dry clay (available at craft stores and most Dollaramas)
- Rolling pin or other hard cylindrical object to roll out the clay
- Hard porous surface to roll out the clay (we used a wooden board)
- Pencil
- Craft knife, clay sculpting tools, or plastic utensils
- Water in a small bowl for moistening the clay
- Small bowl for shaping
- Sandpaper (optional)
- Acrylic paint and brushes





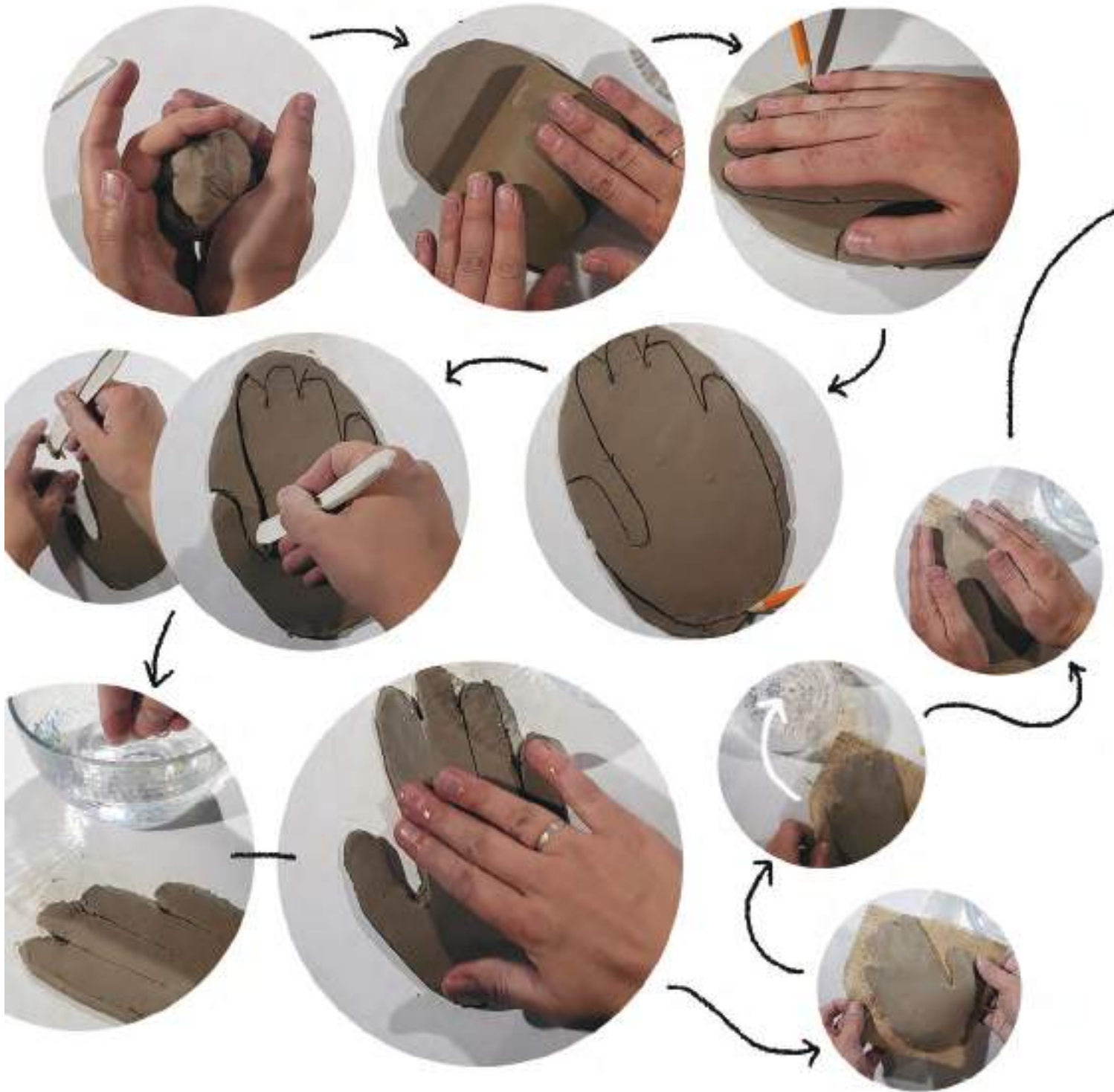
## Instructions:

*Note: Visual instructions can be found on pages 62 and 63.*

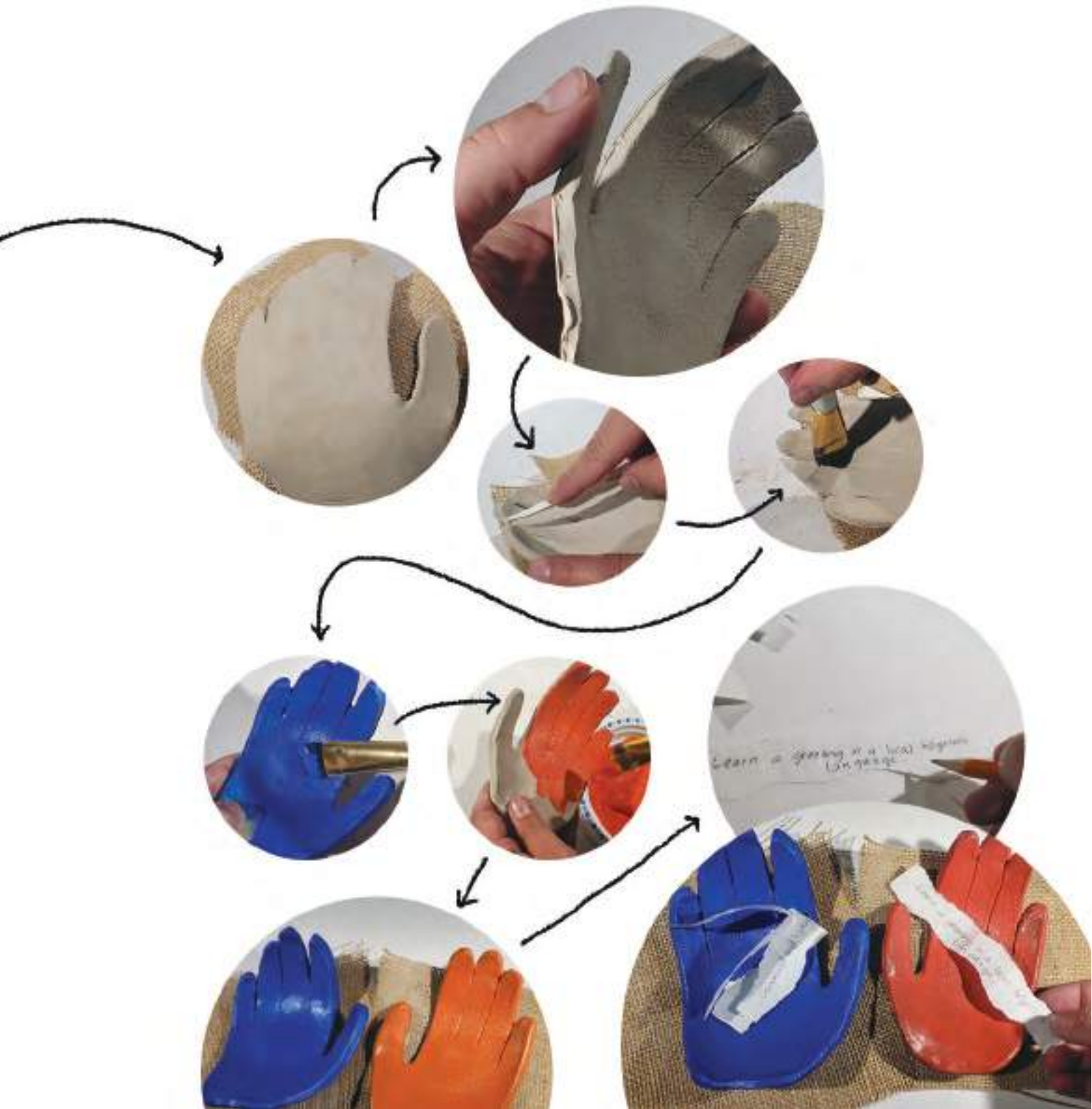
1. Prepare a workstation with a wooden board or other porous board that the air dry clay will not become stuck to when rolling it out in step 3 (avoid plexi and other smooth table surfaces.)
2. Prepare the air dry clay by kneading a ball of it (about the size of a baseball) in your hands to soften and condition it. This makes it easier to work with and reduces the chance of cracking.
3. Roll out the clay on your porous work surface. Flatten the clay ball out using a rolling pin or cylindrical tool to a thickness of about 1/4 to 1/2 inch, creating an elongated oval matching the length and width of your hand.
4. Position your hand, palm side down with your fingers loosely together, on the rolled-out clay, and trace around your hand shape with a pencil (or have a friend help you trace).
5. Remove your hand, and carefully cut along the trace lines with a plastic craft knife or utensil, pulling away the excess clay as you cut.
6. Make indented lines into the clay to indicate the separation of fingers, being careful not to cut all the way through the hand-shaped clay slab.
7. Smooth the edges of the clay hand shape by dipping your fingers in a bowl of water, and then running them along the rough clay edges.
8. Carefully lift the hand-shaped clay slab off of the work surface, and place it on a piece of textured fabric (in our example, we used burlap), making sure the indented finger lines are face down on the fabric. Your clay should still be malleable and soft at this point.
9. With a small bowl upside-down on your work surface, gently place the fabric with the clay hand onto the curved side of the bowl. The palm of the clay hand should be resting on the centre-most part of the bowl, with the layer of fabric in between.
10. Carefully bend the clay hand to match the curvature of the bowl. Use water to smooth out any cracks in the air dry clay as you bend and mold the formation of the clay hand.
11. Place the bowl and the clay hand resting on top of it in a safe dry place to air-dry. Follow the manufacturer's instructions for drying time, as it can vary depending on the brand and thickness of the clay.
12. Once the clay is completely dry, lift the hand off of the bowl and peel off the fabric. Textured fabric leaves an interesting imprint that can add to the aesthetic of the hand-shaped bowl. *Note: As an optional step, you can use fine-grit sandpaper to smooth rough areas or imperfections on the surface and edges. You can also use a plastic knife utensil to refine and carve the edges.*
13. Using a dry paintbrush, dust off the bowl removing any clay dust from sanding or carving, and paint the bowl using acrylic paints. Allow the paint to dry completely.
14. Repeat steps 2-13 to create an opposite hand, leaving you with two painted clay hand bowls.

**Write actions from the Things You Can Do list on pages 44 - 49 onto strips of paper, and place them in one hand bowl. Each time you complete an action, move it to the other hand, signifying the importance of carrying intentions into actions.**

# VISUAL INSTRUCTIONS



# VISUAL INSTRUCTIONS





# ADVANCED ART LESSON

## WATERCOLOUR WEAVINGS

- Grade 10 to Grade 12 -

This activity is meant to honour Indigenous place names as well as the historical significance of Indigenous stories and stewardship that have shaped the landscapes we admire today for generations. Participants will literally weave artistry with cultural learning and appreciation, fostering a deeper connection to the land and its important ancestral stories.

### Preparation

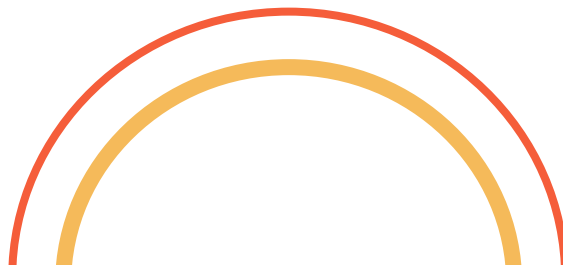
In preparation for this activity, instruct participants to visit and take a photo of a natural landscape that has had an impact on them personally. This impact may be that the landscape is a place their family visits often, and so holds nostalgic meaning, or perhaps it is a secluded spot that they find solace in, spiritually or otherwise. Once participants have selected a landscape and taken a photo, instruct them to find out the current place name of the landscape, and also ask them to find out more about the Indigenous history of that place. They could find out the original Indigenous place name, an Indigenous story about the place, or an important Indigenous figure who is connected to that place. Findings from this preparatory research can be incorporated into a write up for the artwork once it is complete, or participants can weave short sentences on strips of paper into the actual artwork.

**If participants need help finding resources to seek out Indigenous place names or history, we have provided a few online starting places below. Participants should seek out sources that have been vetted and approved by Indigenous peoples.**

- [www.native-land.ca](http://www.native-land.ca)
- <https://umaine.edu/canam/publications/coming-home-map/coming-home-indigenous-place-names-canada-pdf-download/>

### Materials You'll Need:

- Water colour paper (7 in x 10 in)
- Water colour paints  
(dry watercolour paint pans are easiest)  
**We used an Indigenous watercolour paint brand called Beam Paints! You can find these paints at: [www.beampaints.com](http://www.beampaints.com)**
- Paint brushes
- Exacto knife
- Self healing cutting mat
- Ruler or straight edge
- Clear scotch tape
- Pencil
- Pen and sheet of paper
- Painters tape (optional)
- Container of water for washing brushes
- Paper towel or cloth for wiping brushes





## Watercolour Instructions:

*Note: Visual instructions can be found on page 68 and 69.*

1. Print off a photo of the landscape you've chosen to paint after reviewing the Preparation portion of this activity. It could be a simple scene like a lake, mountain, or a combination of trees and a sky.
2. Prepare your workspace and lay down your 7" x 10" watercolor paper on a clean, flat surface, in a horizontal (landscape) orientation. Use painter's tape to secure the paper if needed. Set up your watercolor paints, brushes, water container, and a piece of paper towel or cloth within easy reach.

*Note: We used the Beam watercolour birch paint palette, and mixed colours directly in the paint pans of the birch tree palette.*

3. Lightly sketch the horizon line of your landscape on the paper using a pencil.
4. Wet the area of the landscape foreground below the horizon line with a clean brush and water. Make sure it's evenly damp but not overly wet.
5. Wet your chosen watercolour paint pans with clean water on a clean brush to activate the pigments.

*Note: Experiment with mixing colors on your palette to achieve the desired shades for your landscape elements and sky. Remember that watercolors are transparent, so you can layer colors to create more depth and dimension. You can test colours on your cloth or paper towel.*

6. Apply your chosen color for your foreground using broad, horizontal brush strokes. You can create a gradient by applying more watercolour pigment to start with, and spreading it thinner with water as you pull your brush across the page.
7. Clean off your brush, and apply clean water to the sky area of your landscape.
8. Apply your chosen colors for your sky using broad, horizontal brush strokes.

*Note: Allow colour layers to dry between applications to avoid unwanted blending.*

9. Paint the dominant elements of your landscape (such as mountains, hills, or trees) by applying pigments on top of the sky and horizon foreground layers with careful organic brush strokes. Depending on the composition and layers of the landscape, you may want to use heavy pigments or lighter pigments to show depth and dimension.
10. Add finer details to your landscape painting (like the water ripples on the lake in our example.)
11. Allow your painting to dry completely before handling it further for the Weaving Instructions.

## Weaving Instructions:

*Note: Visual instructions can be found on page 68 and 69.*

1. After your watercolour painting has dried fully, use a straight edge to cut the painting in half down the centre of the landscape. You should end up with two pieces of your painting measuring 5" x 7" in size, which you will use in the following steps.
2. With the left half of the landscape, use a ruler and a pencil to measure and mark evenly spaced lines (1/4" wide spacing will work best) across the landscape, parallel to the horizon line. Begin your lines from the right edge of the sheet and lightly draw the lines towards the left edge, leaving at least one inch of space between the left edge of the paper and the ends of each pencil line.

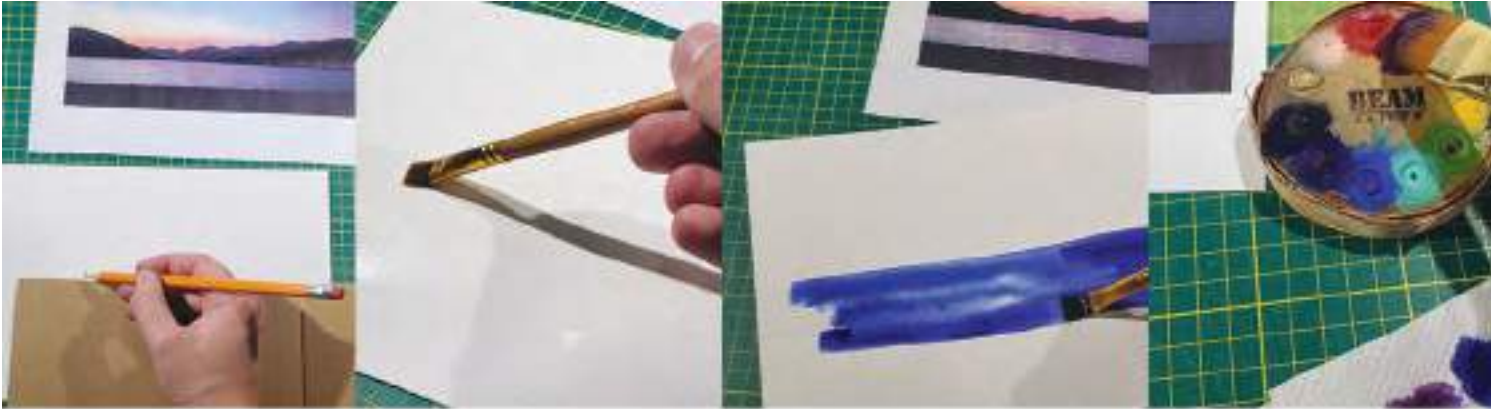
*Note: You can optionally stagger the length of these lines to create visual interest in your weaving but make sure none of the lines extend all the way to both edges of the paper. See page 63 for clarification.*

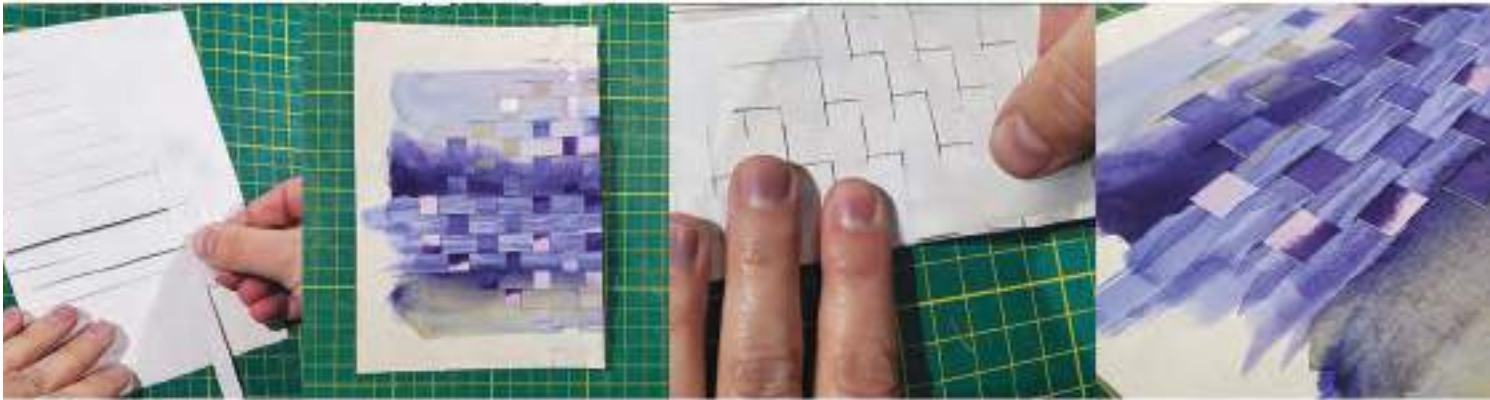
3. Carefully cut along these marked lines with an exacto blade and a straight edge of some kind. Make sure to use a cutting mat to protect your work surface and ensure precise cuts.
4. With the second half of the painting, cut it into 1/4" strips perpendicular to the horizon line.
5. Weave individual strips from step 4 into the split sections you cut in step 2. Fill in the weaving, working strips into the landscape from left to right. With each strip, weave over and under the sections, working opposite to the previous strip.

*Note: If you are unfamiliar with weaving, review the illustration below.*



6. As you weave the strips into the sections, secure them on the back with clear scotch tape.
7. When your weaving is complete, write a short statement about your art piece, describing the current place name for the landscape you depicted alongside its Indigenous place name and any other information you found out about the landscape's Indigenous story.
8. Share these weavings with a group by talking about all of the different places each participant commemorated, and the ancestral histories and Indigenous place names that were learned.





This landscape weaving is of a place called Christina Lake. It is important to me because I went for an art and healing retreat there and the beach and waters were calming and healing. The original Indigenous place name was *Nichelaan* and prior to European settlement it was part of the region inhabited by the *Sinixt* First Nations group also known as *Arrow Lakes People*. It was an important fishing ground as was the *Kettle River* nearby.

The lake was renamed *Christina Lake* after an Indigenous woman named *Christina McDonald* in approximately 1870.

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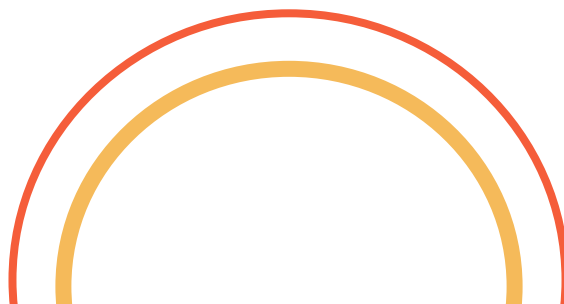
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**Curators** – Diana Frost and Ashley Slemming

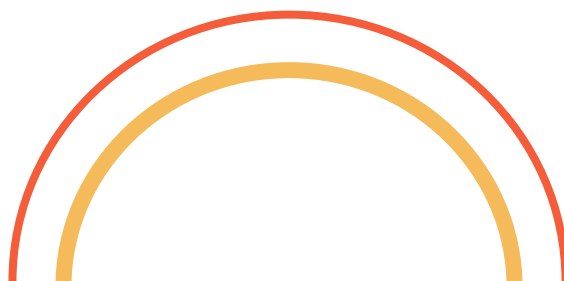
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**Art Printing and Framing** – PIXX Imaging



# SHARE YOUR ACTION PLAN!

If you learned from this exhibition, were inspired by the artworks, or participated in any of the activities listed in this guide, you are invited to reach out to TREX Southwest and Colouring it Forward to share with us what #reconciliACTIONS you are participating in! We want to know what your action plan is to make positive change in Truth and Reconciliation.

## Tag us at

**@trex\_southwest**  
**@cifreconciliationsociety**

## Print off this action plan section, fill it out, and TAKE ACTION!

Today I am grateful for:

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What do I not understand currently, that I could learn and be curious about, to help me understand reconciliation better?

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What I will do for reconciliation today:

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What I will do for reconciliation this month:

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What I will do for reconciliation this year:

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COLOURING IT FORWARD