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KALEIGH STARBLANKET

Beadwork is gaining mainstream popularity

"I find it amazing to see my work in those spaces that Indigenous people don't seem to be occupying that often," said Kaleigh Starblanket.

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April 2022 is our

Arts & Entertainment Issue

May 2022 Issue:
Sports, Mining Week Issue

**By EFN Staff
of Eagle Feather News**

Melanie Monique Rose was moved to tears when she saw one of her creations on television during the Métis delegations meeting with the head of the Roman Catholic Church.

"It's like seeing your baby out in the world, so proud," she said.

Rose, a visual artist from Regina, is of Métis and Ukrainian ancestry.

"As a child, my mom was really into me being immersed in my Ukrainian culture, so when I used to go to my grandma's house everyone spoke Ukrainian," said Rose. "That's really changed, now nobody does that anymore."

Not only did her artwork appear in Rome,

it was also on display at the annual members show for the Sâkêwêwak Artists' Collective Inc., which ran in February through to March in Regina.

Rose focuses on the similarities of her two cultures to inspire her.

"I call my artwork the flower people and I like to say it's a story about me, my family, my people and our connection and relationship to the land ourselves and each other," she said.

When Rose was commissioned to create a one-of-a-kind piece by the Métis Nation – Saskatchewan for Louise Simard, the government's former chief administrative officer (CAO), Rose knew it needed to be special. She created a brilliant blue cape and adorned it with flowers and leaves.

continued page 2 ...



MICHAELA SHANNON

A Platform to be Heard

"You can put our faces on anything but it doesn't mean a thing if you're not inviting us to speak at the table."

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ELDER PROFILE: ERROLL KINISTINO

No plans to slow down

"North of 60 was doing auditions and looking for kids," he said. "I wasn't planning on auditioning, I was just going to drive a van full of kids to the audition. They asked me to audition anyways."

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Métis artist on display in Rome

... continued from page 1

"I am honored that (she) chose to wear it (to the Vatican)," said Rose. "I always hope to put healing medicine and hope into my work."

Like many, she feels the delegation to Rome and the subsequent apology is a good start.



Brandy Royale (left) models the Solstice Star Bird Cape that Melanie Monique Rose (right) created for Louise Simard. (Photo by Melanie Monique Rose)

Rose's interest in expressing both her Métis and Ukrainian heritage began long before she made Simard's cape. The skills she has acquired have come from long hours of research, study and practice.

Rose attended Kootenay School of the Arts with a major in fibre arts in Nelson, B.C.

She expresses her identity through her art by combining old techniques and traditional designs to create something new.

"My works are full of flowers," she said. "I use coloured wool that's been dyed and then I use a process called needle felting. I make these

floral designs onto blankets that I have collected."

Since Rose uses florals in her artwork, she couldn't help but make the connection between Ukrainian scarves and the kokum scarves worn by First Nations people.

"I've always been attracted to these scarves and babushkas," she said. "I always thought it was so interesting how both groups really claim that for themselves."

Rose says the use of the scarves by both cultures demonstrates the friendship between the First Nations here in Western Canada and the Ukrainian Settlers.

"I think it's beautiful," she said. "I love it. I think, 'Yeah! Showing our solidarity for each other and our friendship and just thinking about that original connection of where I started, you know, the two worlds coming together."

Rose learned about the babushkas and the relationship between Ukrainian settlers and First Nations by doing her own research.

"There's a really great book called kokum babushka," she said. "(According to the book) the Cree word, pootishka means 'she is wearing' it is pronounced babushka or pootishka."

Rose grew up hearing the Ukrainian language and says she heard the references of headscarves being called babushkas.

"The Ukrainian word for headscarf is fustka or khusta," she said adding, Ukrainians living in Western Canada say babushka.

Those interested in seeing Rose's artwork still have an opportunity.

The Organization of Saskatchewan Arts Council (OSAC) has a touring exhibit called, The Flower People. It is at the Indian Head Theatre and Community Arts Inc. until Apr 23, 2022.



Box 924 Saskatoon, SK S7K 3M4
306-978-8118, 1-866-323-NEWS (6397)

Eagle Feather News
is published monthly by Eagle Feather Media

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Publications Mail Agreement No: 40027204 | OSSN #1492-7497
Return Undeliverable Canadian Addresses to: EFN Circ., P.O. Box 924 Saskatoon SK S7K 3M4

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Using technology to preserve history

*By NC Raine
for Eagle Feather News*

The Muskeg Lake Cree Nation (MLCN) wanted to preserve its historical documents for future generations, so it approached Saskatchewan Polytechnic (Sask Polytech) for help and together they created a digitization toolkit for anyone interested in doing the same kind of work.

"When your grandchild says 'who is my great-grandmother', you have a place to show them," said Harry Lafond, who initiated the project. "You might have a picture ... and you begin to tell stories about who their great-grandmother was. That's the type of simple, down-to-earth stuff that's so necessary for families to have."

Lafond was chief of MLCN in the 1990s and since then he has been working to preserve and share his community's history. He approached Sask Polytech to help create a sustainable plan to compile and digitize their archives.

Initially, the goal was to create a digital archive of their nation's records, but what emerged was something much bigger, so they decided to share what they learned with others.

"What we were hoping to do is to give people the tools to be able to do this on their own, so it's more sustainable," said Chasity Berast, Sask Polytech program head and instructor for Library and Information Technology. "With the toolkit, it gives any community the information they need to create and sustain a digital archive."

The toolkit contains a variety of practices and standards outlining the best equipment and methods for making something digital. If a community wishes to digitize things like video and audio tapes, photographs, or written documents, the toolkit offers instructions, recommended file types, and manners in which to store the digital files.

"It's basically archiving 101 – a crash course in what to archive and how," said Berast.

Berast applied for funding through the College and Community Social Innovation Fund (CCSIF), and for two years, worked with research and archive



Denise Moreau, Archives Technician, and Erica Hartman, student research assistant, helped to digitize Muskeg Lake Cree Nation documents. (Photo by Chasity Berast)

assistants at MLCN to digitize their historical documents.

The First Nation has compiled an extensive community history located in one place. The digital archive includes soldier settlement documents from 1919, Treaty documents from 1879 to 1920, a list of Chiefs from 1879 to 2000, genealogical documents and more.

"This whole development is such a necessary part of community wellness," said Lafond. "You can't have community wellness if people don't know who they are and where they are from."

The digital toolkit is now available to anyone through the Sask Polytech website.

Berast said the next step is to make the toolkit more accessible and user friendly, so others can preserve their history for future generations.

"I think this will be important for identity building," said Berast. "It will allow a community to learn more about their family, about their history, so they can better tell their story."



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Sharing cultures is Reconciliation

By NC Raine
for Eagle Feather News

Wilbur Sargunaraj hopes to break down barriers and build bridges between cultures with his unique art exhibit.

"Exploring CQ is the first of its kind, because I don't think cultural intelligence has been displayed as an exhibition before," said Sargunaraj.

The Saskatoon-based cultural intelligence facilitator and photographer, who has roots in Tamil Nadu, India, had his exhibit at Wanuskewin Heritage Park for the month of March.

The exhibit is also unique for Wanuskewin, which has a stated mission to 'facilitate the development, presentation and promotion of works by contemporary and traditional Indigenous artists'.

However, considering how much Sargunaraj has contributed to Reconciliation, Wanuskewin was happy to feature his work.

"For us it really fit in as this beautiful stepping stone for people, in general, to be even more comfortable with the process of getting to know other cultures," said Amanda Bullin, manager of customer experience at Wanuskewin.

She believes opening up conversations to discuss and share culture is a part of Reconciliation.

"We have to start being friends and that's also what this exhibit is about," said Sargunaraj.

Exploring CQ is a series of photographs and written compositions that explore cultural intelligence. It compels the viewer to reflect and answer questions on their own.

"The photography (from my travels) became the inspiration behind the gallery, and the cross-cultural interactions I had in these different cultural clusters," said Sargunaraj. "I thought, I should condense it into an exhibition with a focus on how do we engage with our 'other', and how do we confront that unconscious bias."

He explained that cultural intelligence also known as CQ is made up of our capabilities such as drive, knowledge, strategy and action and the exhibit

is designed to help people increase their CQ.

"I think it helps us suspend judgement," he said. "Because if we can understand a cultural value ... then we can ask 'I wonder why?' instead of judging."

Sargunaraj has also developed a 'Reconcili-Action' program where he facilitates workshops and events with Indigenous artists and educators in schools, businesses, and reserves.

"In these events, I'm partnering with local Indigenous friends to show there has to be transformation of the heart," said Sargunaraj. "We can't just be okay with tolerance. We have to start moving away from this us versus them mentality."

Sargunaraj plans to take the exhibit to England, Hawaii, and Greenland, but hopes to get funding to take it to small towns across Saskatchewan, where he thinks it's needed most.

"When I look at Canada, I think we have a long way to go with our cultural intelligence," he said. "I think being culturally intelligent in this society means sitting at the same table, side by side, Indigenous and settler."



Wilbur Sargunaraj's Exploring CQ at Wanuskewin Heritage Park, seeks to increase cultural intelligence by immersing the viewer with values and perspectives from around the world. (Photos by Alexis Pimentel, submitted by Wilbur Sargunaraj)



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Reconciliation Ally

**By Suliman Adam
for Eagle Feather News**

Misty Wensel, owner of Fada Dance Studio in Regina, has made reconciliation a priority in her life.

"The long road of building real relations and bridging this divide, is the only way to access the truth," she said.

The contemporary dancer and educator thought the best way she could contribute to Reconciliation was to not only hold space for Indigenous people, but to provide space.

In December 2021, Wensel opened her studio to weekly two-hour sessions for groups to practice cultural events. The age group is open to



Chasity Delorme (centre) in the Fada Dance Studio with participants of her powwow dance class with Tasheena Panipekeesick at the far right. (Photo by Misty Wensel)

both teenagers and adults.

Chasity Delorme took Wensel up on the offer of free dance space and started a powwow dance class for members of the community.

Wensel said the relationship has been mutually beneficial.

"Delorme gives insights from her worldview and philosophy of how the messages and work is coming through," said Wensel. "[She] is a liaison for this work to share information and help us with bridging, and to create a process."

Delorme commends Wensel's allyship in the community and appreciates her self-awareness and consistent effort to grow.

"More opportunities arise to do this work of reconciliation and building friendships, bonds, and collaborations," said Wensel. "It's there to be shared and used to create a community and keep the spirit alive."

Tasheena Panipekeesick is a long-time powwow dancer, but lives in Regina and working full time and raising a family has meant that she doesn't have much time to travel to powwows like she once did.

So when Delorme began offering the powwow dance classes, Panipekeesick decided to join the class.

She's glad she did.

"I love it," said Panipekeesick. "I really enjoyed the opportunity to share space with other Indigenous women and in sharing the energy

that's created when we're dancing. Having that experience, it's so fulfilling to be able to express myself in an environment other than my kitchen and living room."

She's happy Delorme and Wensel have created a welcoming and safe environment for Indigenous women to participate in a cultural activity within the city.

"There are a lot of new people who never danced before or danced long ago, now they have this space where they can learn from other people like Chastity and myself," said Panipekeesick. "Although I have never met Misty, I feel like this is an act of reconciliation. By sharing space, without any outside interference, creates a safe place for new dancers to learn and grow."

Since meeting, Delorme and Wensel have formed a friendship and have long conversations about culture and reconciliation. Delorme respects Wensel for taking reconciliation so seriously.

"She always wondered if she was ever doing enough to help contribute to the truth and reconciliation journey," Delorme said about Wensel. "She gives space to other Indigenous women to learn about their cultural dances or to practice ... I think that's a really beautiful relationship to have because it's positive."

Wensel hopes to attract even more Indigenous dancers to the dance space.

"I'm hoping that these relationships and friendships will deepen," Wensel said. "We will see this through, both the creative (work) and hard work of reconciliation."

To learn more about the dance studio or Misty Wensel, visit www.fadadance.ca.



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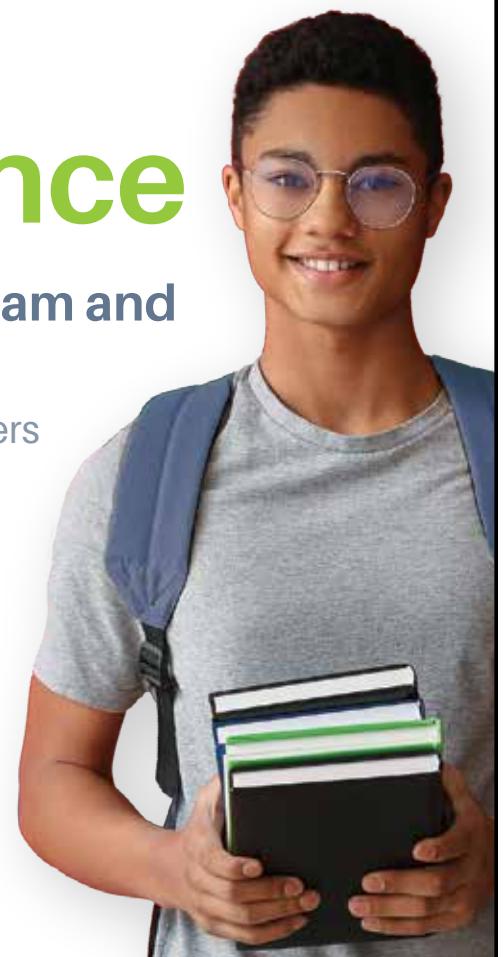
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Long time artist has found a new way to help others express their identity

*By Kaitlynn Nordal
for Eagle Feather News*

Sometimes a tattoo is more than just ink – it's a statement.

Regina-based tattoo artist Stacey Fayant says they can be a symbol of where a person has been, who they are and where they are going.

As a child, Fayant was always drawing and asking her parents for art supplies.

Her talent was so obvious, in secondary school, her teacher noticed and gave Fayant her own space to create.

"He gave me space in the art room that was just for me," said Fayant. "He encouraged me to keep making art."

Although Fayant received a fine arts degree, becoming a tattoo artist never crossed her mind.

"I got a shop tattoo at 18 and that was all I had," said Fayant.

After a life-altering event Fayant saw a documentary on traditional Indigenous tattooing in the Philippines.

"They were talking about the medicinal value and how it heals and I thought I wish my people had something like that," said Fayant.

Coincidentally, not long afterward she seen a Facebook post about traditional North America tattoos.

"I didn't know anything about that and my dad didn't know anything about that," said Fayant. "I just knew I had to be a part of the revitalization of that tradition. I didn't know how, but I knew I wanted to be a part of that."

So, she started researching and discovered Earthline Tattoo Collective where was accepted into a training program in early 2019.

Fayant was trained in a mix of traditional practices, health and safety measures – but really enjoyed learning about the tradition of tattoos in North America.

"Specifically with tattooing, colonizers did a good job of making it taboo, talking about [tattoos] in terms of something savage and something evil," said Fayant.

Part of her goal as a tattoo artist is to reclaim that hidden history because traditional tattoos and traditional tattoo methods are not connected to capitalism, pop culture or Western culture.

"It is finding our way to our own beliefs about art and our bodies and our own beliefs about what is important," said Fayant.

This is why she chooses not to do tattoos in exchange for money.

"Our people have been through so much in terms of colonization," she said. "I feel that because the tattoo was taken from us in such a way that it was even forgotten about ... it's important that it is available for our people no questions asked (as a way) to revitalize it."

Although she has done a variety of tattoos over the years, traditional face, neck and hand tattoos are what Fayant predominantly focuses on.

"It's important in our revitalization to bring back those tattoos and bring back the beauty of those tattoos and the meaning that is behind them," she said. "Those tattoos lift us up and show to our community that we belong to a certain people and that we believe our bodies are beautiful."

Fayant said it's an empowering experience to give someone a face tattoo.

"It's a huge honour to me. I think of those people as warriors who are walking strongly and boldly through this society," she said.



Regina based tattoo artist Stacey Fayant has always been creative and enjoyed drawing. (Photo by S. Fayant)



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Northern Region 3	Île-à-la-Crosse	April 11	5-9 PM
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	Pinehouse	April 13	5-9 PM
		April 14	11-4 PM, 5-9 PM
Eastern Region 1	Cumberland House	April 19	5-9 PM
		April 20	11-4 PM, 5-9 PM
Eastern Region 2	Porcupine Plain	April 21	5-9 PM
	Melfort	April 22	11-4 PM, 5-9 PM
Western Region 2A	Saskatoon	April 26	11-4 PM, 5-9 PM
Youth	Online Consultation	April 25	5-9 PM

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Model and TV host has a new Regina gig

By NC Raine
for Eagle Feather News

Fashion brands like Nordstrom Canada, RW&Co, and BonLook have given Michaella Shannon a platform, and she's using it to shine a light on those often left in the dark.



Michaella Shannon, a model and television host is taking on a new role at CTV Regina, expect to see her on television in the near future. (Photo by Michalla Shannon)

"That's what I want to do – to help other people get where they want to go, and make sure I'm not the last person going through these doors," she said. "I want those doors open for other Indigenous people."

By writing for CBC Life, hosting segments on etalk, and digging into issues on RW&Co Conversations, Shannon helps provide a voice on issues like Indigenous feminism, identity, racism, and the importance of being an ally.

In her newest gig, Shannon is working as an associate producer at CTV Regina in order to learn the mechanics of broadcast journalism. She hopes to transition to an on-camera news anchor.

"There needs to be more Indigenous representation everywhere, but specifically here in Saskatchewan. There are only two people at CTV Regina who are Indigenous, including myself," she said.

As an associate producer, Shannon said she is gaining valuable experience learning everything it takes to put a news program together, from writing scripts to video technicalities. Naturally, she wants to use the opportunity to find stories of other Indigenous people in Saskatchewan.

"There's so many success stories and talent in Saskatchewan that is Indigenous: music, art, academics. There's so many people doing great things."

As a public figure, Shannon is grateful to be able to speak freely on the issues she finds important, but said there is a downside.

"Sometimes I'm the only Indigenous voice in that space, so I'm often heavily relied on to speak for all Indigenous people," she said. "I constantly have to remind them (that) my voice is my voice (and) I can't speak for all Indigenous people."

Sometimes the expectation of her are heavy, but said it's a burden worth carrying for those coming up behind her.

"Since I have this following, I know there's people who listen to the things I say, or seek mentorship or advice," said Shannon. "Especially the younger generations, it's important to me to show them that anything is possible as an Indigenous person."

Taryn Roske,
Cigar Lake employee,
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Beading is more than just a skill: it's art

By Kaitlynn Nordan
for Eagle Feather News

Kaleigh Starblanket is taking her intricate patterned beadwork to a whole new level and to an entirely new audience – thanks to some big names.

Most recently, Paulina Alexis from Nakoda Sioux Nation, known for her role as Willie Jack on FX's Reservation Dogs, her appearance in Ghostbusters: Afterlife and Beans, attended the Critic's Choice Awards wearing Indigenous fashion including a pair of beaded hair ties that were created by Starblanket. A photo of Alexis wearing the beaded hair ties appeared in Vogue on March 14.

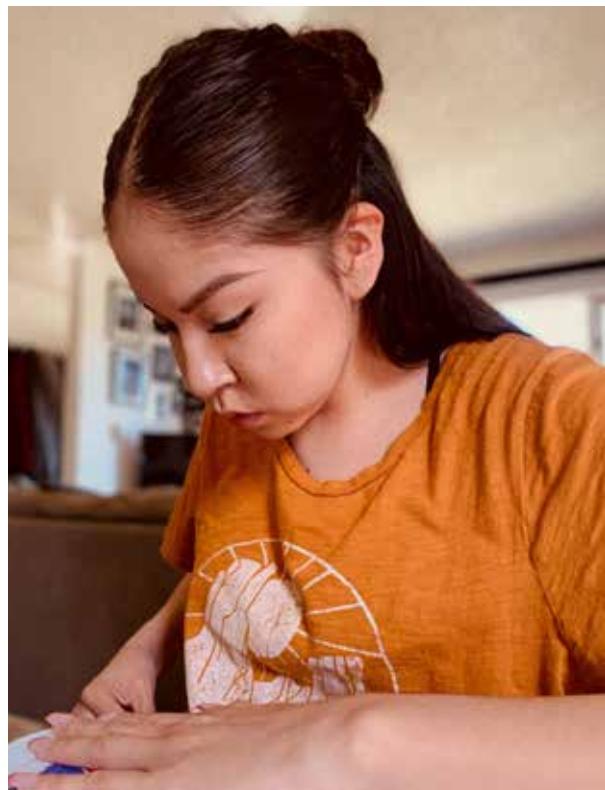
Kacey Musgraves, an American singer and songwriter also posted a photo on Instagram wearing a pair of Starblanket's beaded earrings.

"I find it amazing to see my work in those spaces that Indigenous people don't seem to be occupying that often," said Starblanket.

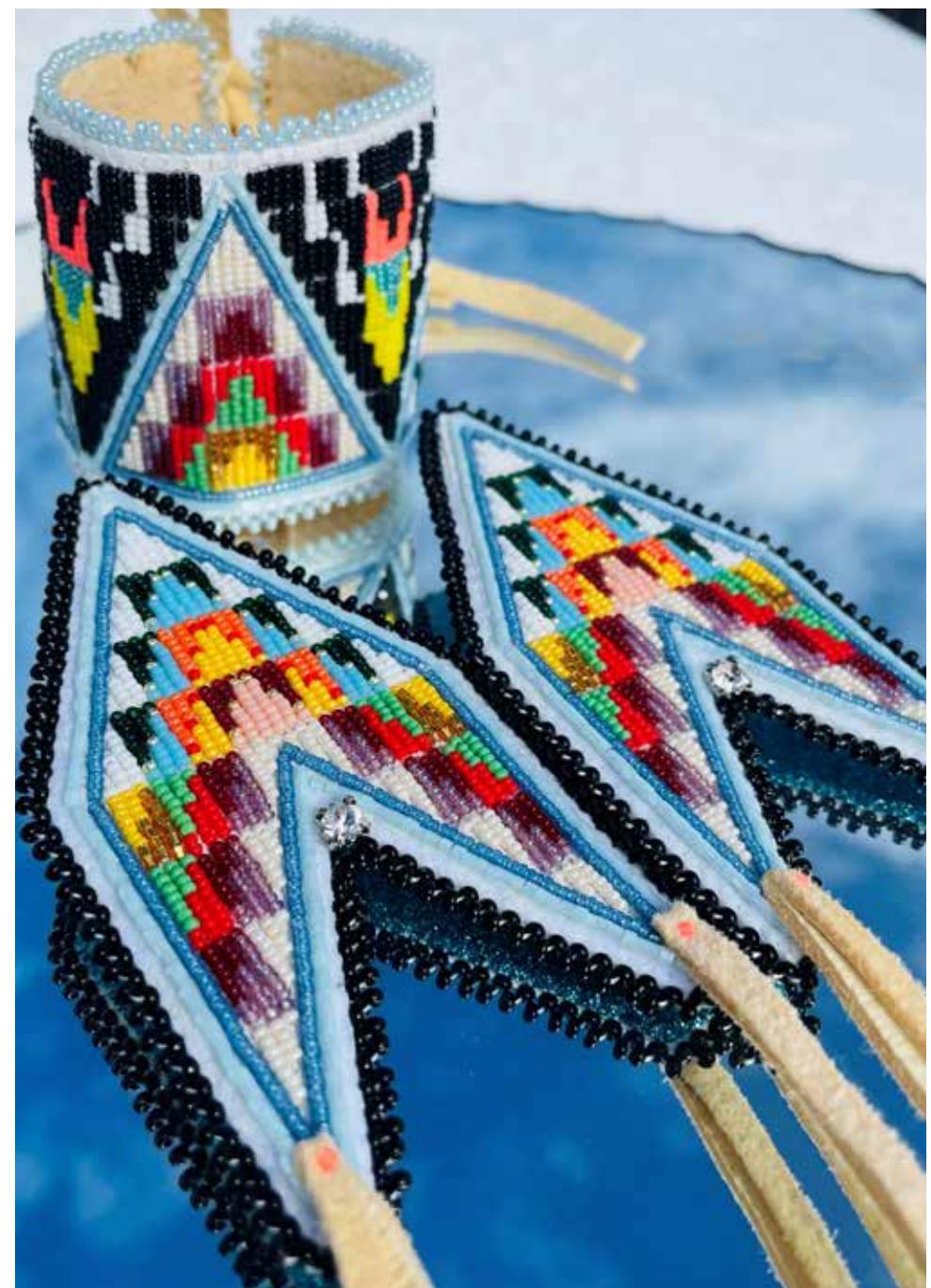
Social media Influencers like Tia Wood have also stepped out in public wearing some of Starblanket's beaded creations.

The young designer and artist believes creating intricate designs with tiny, colourful beads is a way for her to connect with her family and to her history.

Starblanket and her two older siblings are all long-time



Starblanket hard at work. (Photo supplied)



Starblanket has created her own unique style of beadwork, which are a combination of her Cree and Dakota ancestry that involve intricate geometric patterns as seen in the beaded earring and matching cuff set. A similar set of hair ties made by Starblanket were worn by Paulina Alexis to the Critics Choice Awards in March. (Photo supplied)



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powwow dancers and their mother Margaret created all their regalia for them.

"I always wanted to be like (my mom) and create beadwork for other people because that's what she did," said Starblanket. "She taught me to always bead from the heart and with good intentions."

Starblanket's unique design style is reminiscent of her Cree and Dakota ancestry.

"The fact that our people have done this for hundreds of years always inspired me," said Starblanket. "It fascinated me that our people were able to create their traditional clothing and beadwork and each tribe had their own way of creating certain pieces."

She has worked many years to perfect her style, which is very distinct. Samples of her beadwork are on the L. Starblanket Art Facebook page and Instagram @lstarblanketart.

By the time Starblanket reached high school people were purchasing her creations.

"My family and my siblings encouraged me (and made me believe) my work was good enough," she said.

Once she realized people were interested in her work, she set new goals and expectations for herself.

Her drive to perfect her skills and try new things is paying off because people recognize her style and her pieces are in demand.

"It makes me feel like I accomplished something," said Starblanket.

However, she's not letting her newfound success go to her head.

Starblanket remains focused on her education and says her beading comes second to her studies.

"I feel like I am in a good position right now," said Starblanket. "I hope once I am done with my degree I can expand more."

Punchlines and life lessons: sometimes a story is more than just a story

*By NC Raine
for Eagle Feather News*

For Saskatoon artist Zoey Roy stories have always been a portal to a world full of joy, sadness, frustration and even understanding.

"I loved listening to my mom and her friends tell stories back and forth to each other," she said. "I loved the way they would build onto each other's stories and jokes then burst out into laughter together."

She said a story can culminate into a funny punchline or become a life lesson.

Roy's love of storytelling is obvious to those around her, which is why Deborah Lee from University Libraries suggested she apply to be the next Indigenous storyteller in residence at the University of Saskatchewan.

"(Lee) has always been very supportive of my work," said Roy. "I was so happy to hear that they were interested in me."

The previous storyteller in residence was Lindsay 'Eekwol' Knight.

"She is a huge inspiration to me so I am happy to trail behind, even though I will never be the sequel of Eekwol," said Roy.

Melissa Just, dean of the university library, who is involved in the program said the avid storyteller was a great fit for the role.

"(Roy) is not only a dynamic, creative personality, but she's had considerable experience working in Indigenous communities across Saskatchewan – particularly with youth within those communities," said Just. "It was such a wonderful opportunity to have her bring those experiences into the library and share them with us through her storytelling."

Roy is happy with her time in the role particularly with the workshops.

"There were some people that came back each week and then there were some people that came for a few sessions," she said. "Some people came and listened and others got super involved. It was a diverse group of people from

all over the world."

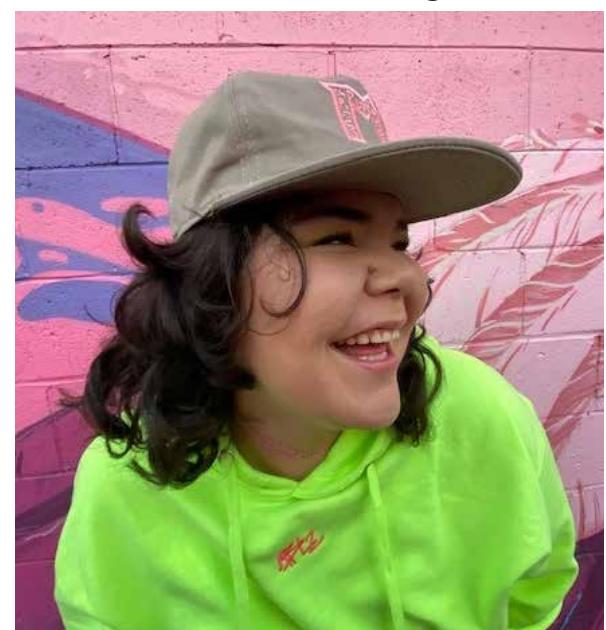
Just is equally pleased with how everything went.

"(Roy) was an outstanding storyteller – funny, smart, committed," she said. "All of the feedback we received was extremely positive. The workshops she developed for the residency were in fact so successful that she's going to continue meeting with participants even after the residency concludes."

For Roy, it was also about having an impact as an artist.

"This role is significant because it provides time and space for an artist to have a meaningful impact on how creatives interpret indigeneity, colonialism and the convergence of the two," she said. "I gained insight into how rich and diverse the creative writing community is today. I also realize there is a strong interest in learning spoken word."

Although her tenure is over, Roy continues to run poetry nights for free every Thursday. Anyone interested can go to her website www.zoeyroy.com for more information.



Zoey Roy completed her role as the Indigenous Storyteller in Residence at the University of Saskatchewan and couldn't be happier with the experience. (Photo by L. Muller)

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Using his words to win battles

By Adeoluwa Atayero
for Eagle Feather News

Spoken word artist, Austin Ahenakew, will be representing Regina at the Canadian Individual Poetry Slam (CIPS) in Vancouver later this month.

The young poet qualified after winning the Regina Word Up: CIPS Qualifying Slam on March 23.

"I was a little shocked and overwhelmed when I found out that I won," Ahenakew said. "This is my second year competing and I am very proud to represent Regina in Vancouver."

He began writing poetry in the third grade, but in the eighth grade his mother found his poetry and took him to a poetry slam event.

Ahenakew was hooked and has been performing and competing ever since.

"In the beginning, I started off writing sappy stuff, but as I progressed I have started writing stuff I can push with my voice," he said. "Like issues on the reserve and pre-conceived assumptions about me and my people."

The 20-year-old said being an Indigenous person is the most important part of being a performer.

"My most well-received piece is titled 'Reserved for the beast' and it's one of my favourites to perform," he said. "It talks about issues on the reserve. That piece has been the main point in my poetry career and I don't know what direction my writing would have gone without it."

Ahenakew feels confident in the material he has prepared for the compe-



Austin Ahenakew uses his voice to bring attention to important Indigenous issues. (Photo supplied)

tition in Vancouver but would like to prepare something new to perform.

"I believe that my community supports me enough that I can keep my confidence high enough to give a good performance and be a good competitor over there," he said.

One of the many people rooting for Ahenakew is Cat Abenstein, Spoken Word Coordinator at Creativity City Centre.

Abenstein remembers meeting Ahenakew as a shy fifteen-year-old and being impressed by how mature his material was even back then.

"He makes the world a better place by being courageous with his words," she said. "I think he's the right person for the job and I think this would help him develop even more by being in the midst of other champions."

She also said that she hopes the opportunity helps him connect with a network of artists across the country, as well as grow as an artist.

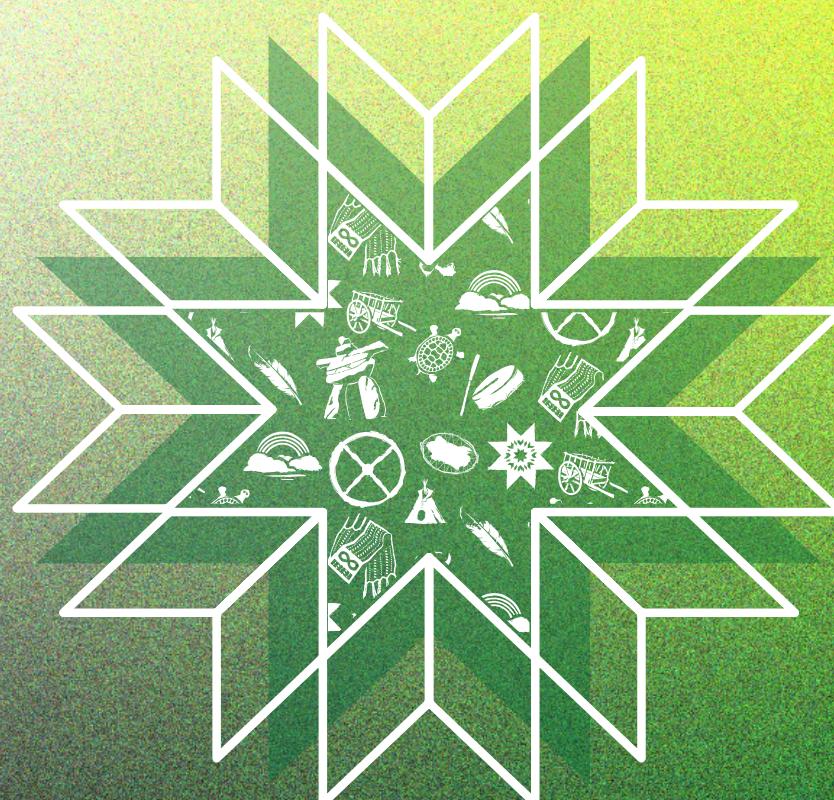
Man Cloud:

*I am a man cloud,
that's only a sentence a poet would say.
Maybe it's better to say that I'm a man storm cloud,
Cuz I'm big, dark, scary and only the right kinds of people won't say "oh shit" as
I come their way.*

I swear I'm putting on my best version of my white face.

*Huge fake smile, fix my posture and a firm handshake, but it makes me feel
guilty.
Cuz people make brown skin feel like a disease and while many of my people
live with it happily,
I just feel like there's something wrong with me.
Cuz I go by the code name Big Moses.
And it's definitely not due to any religious devotion.
It's cuz I can split a crowd like the Red Sea without even the slightest motion.*

*Walking through any room feels like I'm surrounded by a house of mirrors cuz
there's so many eyes staring back at me.
Now... when I look into the mirrors, a clouded man is all that's seen.*



Congratulations Students!



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During Indigenous Achievement Week in March, over 50 Indigenous students received awards for their accomplishments in academics, community engagement, leadership, research and resiliency. Congratulations to everyone and thank you for all you do!

Tuberculosis is an old foe now returning

Tuberculosis (TB) is among the most persistent of diseases experienced by Indigenous people. It's an old sickness once thought to be a disease of the past, but has since returned.

The rate of TB cases on Indigenous First Nations in Canada is over forty times higher than the non-Indigenous population. In 2021 Saskatchewan fully forty two percent of cases occurred on First Nations. One in three cases were children.

TB is spread through the air entering the lungs. Only a few will develop the disease, but those who do experience fatigue, chest pain and persistent coughing leading to coughing blood. The disease then moves into the body attacking bones and internal organs. Effective medications were only developed during the nineteen forties.

The consumption, as it was once known, took many First Nation lives. Virtually every family lost a relative or more to the disease. The Influenza epidemic of 1918 also killed many. The death toll was so fast and so extensive mass graves were hurriedly dug on every reserve. Little is known nor recalled from that troubled time.

TB is preventable and can be treated. It is no longer the epidemic it once was but it is still impacting First Nations communities. The

most recent outbreak occurred in the north at Black Lake, Fond-du-Lac and Pelican Narrows.

First Nations are especially vulnerable due to overcrowded housing, sanitary conditions and access to health care due in part to the continuing impact of colonization. Although

temporary stay for others it was long term. They were strict and regimented places. There were three in Saskatchewan. These were at Fort Qu'Appelle, Saskatoon and Prince Albert. They featured large balconies where bedridden patients were brought. Treatment at this time included fresh air but, in some cases, patients were confined to body casts and straitjackets.

They had no say in treatment and weren't allowed visits. There are horrendous but credible accounts of children being subjected to medical experimentation. This is almost unbelievable and cruel.

Whenever First Nations people were powerless the worst oppression was free to happen and did. This includes the abuse of children in residential schools. Despite a fearsome experience for some, healing did happen for the many while others died from the disease.

The sanatoriums are now closed and replaced by modern medicine and improved health care.

First Nations now receive accessible quality health care. Much can be written about the former segregated substandard underfunded Indian Affairs health care system provided to First Nations. It leaves a bitter taste.



Breaking Trail

John Cuthand

the infection rate is small, weakened immune systems increase the odds of infection.

The very high rates of diabetes among First Nations people definitely lowers immunity as does COVID. Children are especially vulnerable.

In the recent past, active cases received treatment at sanatoriums. For many it was a



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Paranteau - A musical family man

By Marjorie Roden
for Eagle Feather News

Born and raised in Prince Albert, Donny Parenteau is a multi-instrumental, singer, and songwriter who prides himself on his storytelling abilities through song, but says he's a proud Métis family man first.

"The thing is, you don't realize when you become a parent it shifts your priorities," said Parenteau. "I've been very blessed, when I first met my wife, she had two children from a previous marriage which taught me how to be a father. Then, when you hold your baby in your arms for the very first time, it changes your life. That's when I said, 'Everything I do from now on is no longer done for me, but for my family and I continue to live my life this way.'"

He is looking forward to performing very soon.

His 13-year-old daughter Julianna Parenteau will be part of the ensemble cast of the show Donny Parenteau's Colors of the Sash on May 5th at the E.A. Rawlinson Centre.

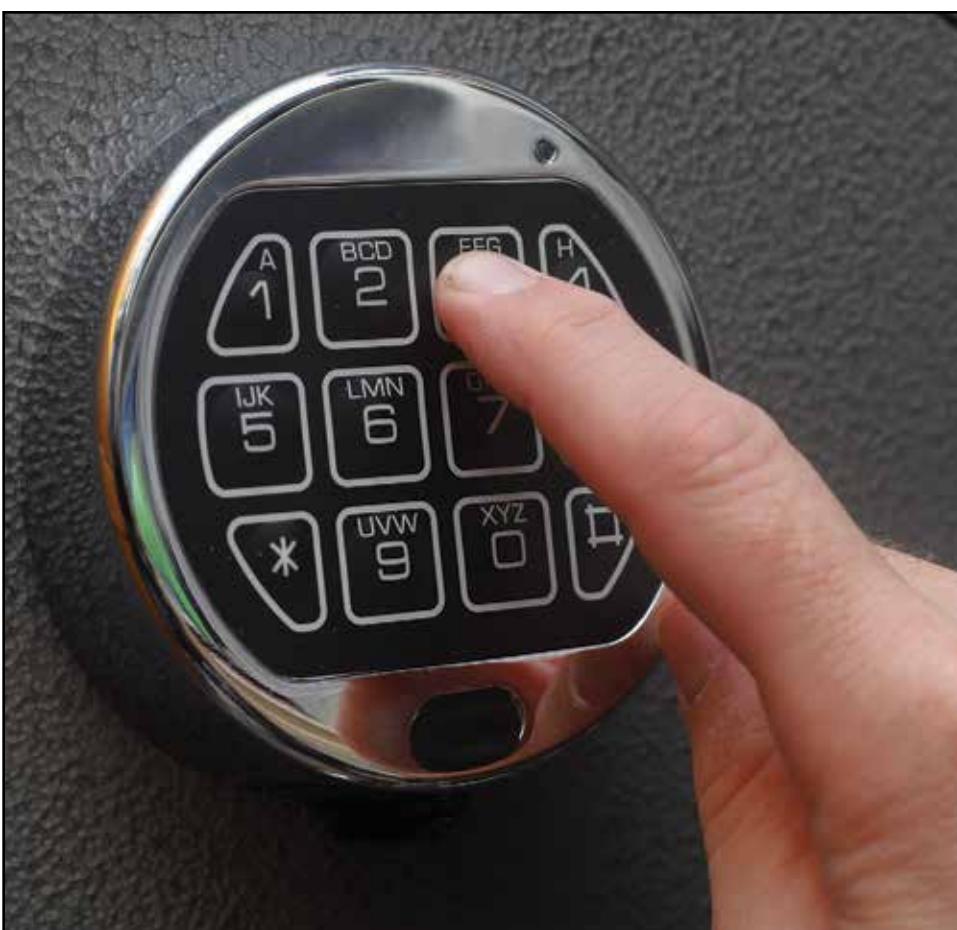
"She's always been one of my favourite singer," said Paranteau. "I'm very happy she's going to be in the show with me."

The Colours of the Sash show started in 2019 with the help of Karon Shmon of (the Gabriel Dumont Institute). It focuses on teaching the Métis culture to students in and around Prince Albert. The presentations are followed up by a concert with Paranteau's close friends.

"I love creating story songs," said Paranteau. "I'm a very huge fan and am inspired by the older songs and songwriters."

Some of his favourite storytellers include Merle Haggard, George Jones, Buck Owens and Charley Pride.

"That music and that style were story songs," said Paranteau. "Tom T.



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Donny Paranteau is a multi-talented musician and plays several instruments, but the Métis artist says he has a deep connection to the fiddle that he can't explain. (Photo by Donny Paranteau)

Hall was legendary for story songs, and I love telling stories in my songs too."

Although some of his songs are purely for fun his passion is to write a story and set it to music.

Parenteau's love of music began when he was 12-year-old and he joined the school band.

"I played the trombone, baritone and then I played the guitar, but when I picked up a fiddle, that's what changed my life," he said. "It totally changed everything I do, because with the fiddle, that was the connection to my soul and what I feel."

Paranteau has always felt a deep connection to the fiddle and learned to play it by ear.

"I have an emotion that comes over me when I play and I don't think about what it is that I'm playing," he said. "That's when my mother told me, 'You have a gift so don't take it for granted because it can be taken away from you as fast as you got it.'"

Parenteau's fiddle has taken him all over the world and he is proud to be back home in Prince Albert passing on his knowledge at the Donny Parenteau School of Music.

To learn more about Donny Parenteau and his most recent activities, check out his official website at <http://www.donnyparenteau.com>, or his Facebook page at <http://www.facebook.com/DonnyParenteau>.

Riva Farrell Racette uses her songwriting talents to raise awareness

*By Suliman Adam
for Eagle Feather News*

In February, Riva Farrell Racette released her new song, "Stolen Sister," which honours the lives of missing and murdered Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQ+ (MMIWG2S) people.

Since the single was released, Farrell Racette, who is affiliated with the Keeseekoos and Timiskaming First Nations, and a long-time part of Regina's punk rock music scene, says the song has been "resonating with people from all walks."

It took her nearly a decade to be ready to share it with the world.

"I initially got the inspiration for the song in 2013, and started putting pen to paper and writing the guitar line for it in 2014," she said.

Over the years, Farrell Racette's songwriting process was influenced by major social, legal and political changes. This included increasingly urgent calls to address the number of MMIWG2S in Canada and the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls.

"So the songwriting arc has followed that, to some extent," she said.

Although Farrell Racette performed the song live a few times, it remained a work in progress.

"I never quite knew how to end the song — which is kind of symbolic in and of itself," she said. "I just didn't know how it was going to end."

Then, last February, she was working on the song at home with her acoustic guitar and chose to end on an "unfinished note" — because the story isn't finished yet, either.

"In terms of chord progression, songs will often end on a note that brings everything to a resolution," she said. "But I ended up embracing the idea that I didn't know how it was going to end, and just resolved on an unfinished-sounding kind of chord."

That "unfinished ending" version she posted on Facebook has now been listened to thousands of times, and became the final version of the song.

Farrell Racette said she wanted the song to be "an anthem for MMIW" and provide "a measure of comfort" to families who are missing loved ones.

She particularly wanted to push back against some of the prevailing biases and stereotypes about Indigenous women because they are often "dehumanized, reduced down to their circumstances, or painted in really broad strokes."

Farrell Racette hopes the song will help tell a more complete story.

"Those people who have been lost and are missing, they're more than just a statistic and more than just the circumstances where they were last seen," she said. "These are living, breathing human beings. They've got family who can still hear their voice, or maybe they don't hear their voice quite as clearly anymore because so much time has passed."

"These are people who loved, they laughed, they faced barriers — they just lived."

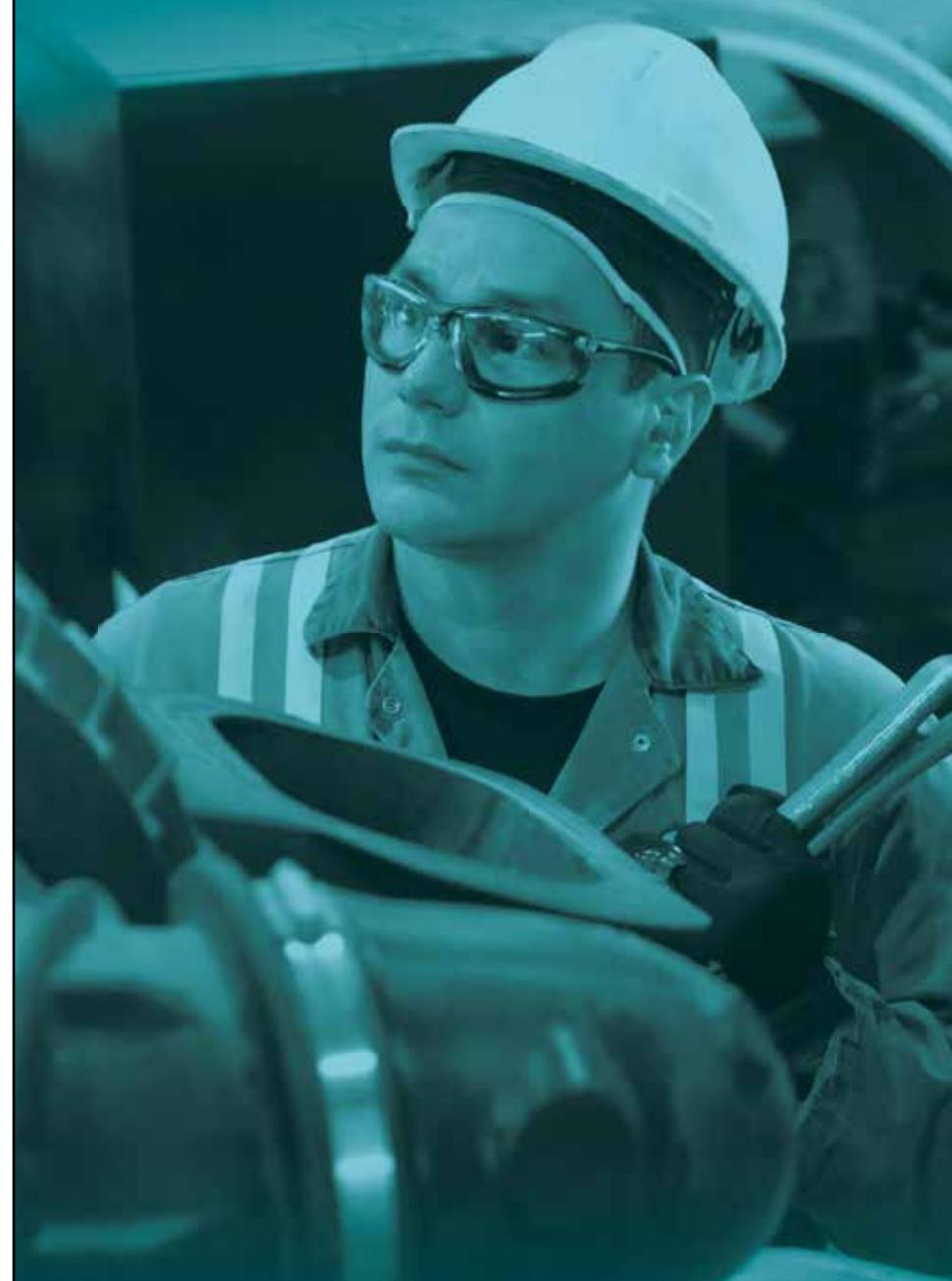
Farrell Racette also released a music video of "Stolen Sister," which was produced by Rob White of Hot Tag Films. In the video, Farrell Racette shares the screen with quotes from the final report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls, and encourages listeners to go and read the report in full.



Riva Farrell Racette's new single, "Stolen Sister," was written as "an anthem" for missing and murdered Indigenous women, girls and two-spirit people.

(Photo by Riva Farrell Racette)

The Indigenous Apprenticeship Initiative is accepting proposals until **MAY 26, 2022.**



The Indigenous Apprenticeship Initiative (IAI) program creates awareness for apprenticeship training and promotes the trades as a top career. The IAI is now accepting proposals for innovative projects, including apprenticeship courses, mentoring projects, career exploration and more.

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Elder Profile

Erroll Kinistino loves to entertain

By NC Raine
for Eagle Feather News

Life-long musician, actor, and entertainer Erroll Kinistino, 70, refuses to let anything slow him down.

The member of Ochapowace First Nation is most known for his roles on television series' North of 60 and Corner Gas. A near death experience made Kinistino even more determined to live life to the fullest, which includes pursuing more acting roles.

In November of 2020, he contracted COVID-19, which exacerbated his diabetes condition and was hospitalized for over a month, with barely the lung capacity to sing or even speak.

"I was pretty close to not making it," he said. "I used to sing daily, but while I was sick, my lung capacity got really bad. I could barely get up and walk to the window."

Kinistino relied on his love of music during his recovery. Singing one verse in his hospital bed eventually progressed to singing to an entire song. It wasn't long before the consummate entertainer was belting out several tunes for the nursing staff.

"To me, music is therapy," said Kinistino. "It gave me happiness while I was sick. It gave me a second chance. COVID couldn't suppress my love for the arts, my love for music."

Kinistino has had a long love affair with the arts. He traces it back to his youth, with some of his earliest memories being his parents taking him to powwows. He said the music resonated deeply within him.

"I was drawn to the drum," he said. "There was something about it that said, 'Wow, you are a native. You are an Indian!'"

Throughout high school and university, Kinistino immersed himself in both music and dance. It was also when he began cultivating his vocal talents,



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and developing a love for performing.

The love of performing for an audience led to work on the stage and eventually found his way onto television.

Kinistino auditioned for the CBC mini-series, Conspiracy of Silence and was disappointed when he didn't land the role.

Little did he know his big break was just around the corner. Kinistino's outgoing nature and willingness to try new things is perhaps one of his biggest assets to have especially in the entertainment industry.

"North of 60 was doing auditions and looking for kids," he said. "I wasn't planning on auditioning, I was just going to drive a van full of kids to the audition. They asked me to audition anyways."

Kinistino got the part, and the rest is television history.

"When I got cast, they promised me five episodes," he said. "It ended up being 54."

Kinistino played 'Leon Deela', which initially presented a challenge because the character was an alcoholic. He wanted to play the character devoid of the typical cliches and stereotypes often applied to Indigenous people.

Kinistino says alcoholism is an illness many people have to deal with, so it was important for him to not play into stereotypes.

"So I played the character with dignity, instead of an over abundance of craziness," said Kinistino.

A few years after North of 60 ended, Kinistino landed a recurring role on Corner Gas – an experience he loved.

After the show ended, Kinistino returned to his first love – music.

He along with his partner Josie Linka started a band called the Dog River Band.

Linka said Kinistino not only has an inexhaustible love for the arts, but also for connecting with those around him.

"He's such a personable person," said Linka. "When he's in public, people come up to him and want photos. He's always graceful and approachable. He always starts talking to people like they're friends, asking about their family."

One of those people he has connected with is Shannon McNabb who performs under the name Shannon Rae.

She said Kinistino has been very influential in helping to shape her as an artist. He has mentored her and given her advice when it comes to stage performance as well as guitar playing and song writing.

Kinstino's music spans over a multiple of genres from blues, folk and country," said McNabb. "(He) has been my biggest encourager. He even travelled with me down to Nashville."

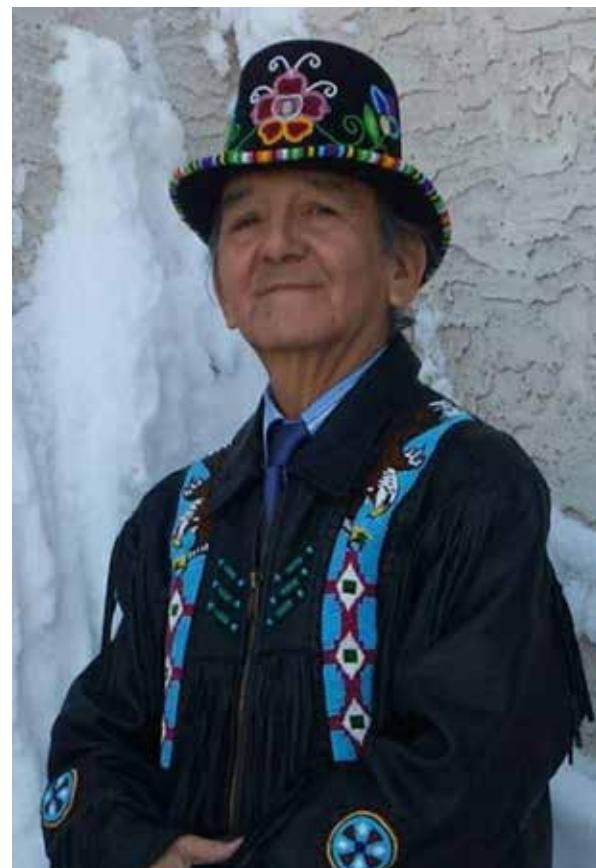
She appreciates all that he's done and shared with her to help her grow as an artist.

Kinistino continues to be as ambitious as ever: he and the Dog River Band are playing on the main-stage at this year's Ness Creek Music Festival.

He also has his eyes set on another Indigenous-led TV series.

"I want to go to Oklahoma and be on the set of Reservation Dogs. That show is finally hitting the humour that Native people have. They get who we are," said Kinistino.

"They've inspired me as an artist. I want to be a part of it," he said. "Even if it's just a small, walk-on part. I could be a Mushum sitting in the bush."



Erroll Kinistino is a long time performer and entertainer and doesn't plan on slowing down anytime soon. (Photo supplied)

Two-Spirit Couple share their love of art

**By EFN Staff
for Eagle Feather News**

Paulete Poitras and Cheryl Prosper are using art to not only channel their creativity, but to express themselves as a two-spirit couple.

Recently the pair collaborated on artwork, but it may not be the last time.

"The beaded lanyard, the work itself really spoke to me," said Prosper. "As an artist, I was able to interpret what Wascana meant to me. The beaded lanyard that represented the man-made lake called Wascana felt like I was beading water. (The) collaboration with my wife felt wholesome and surreal."

Their work was part of the Sakewewak Artists Collective's Storytellers Festival's annual art exhibit in Regina last month.

Prosper, who is from the One Arrow First Nation, says it was an unexpected opportunity, but one that was important to both of them.

"Being two-spirit has many stereotypes to overcome because society is complex," she said. "These complexities are sometimes difficult to navigate. My wife and I work together to build a life that we feel comfortable with. We are a team and a lot of that is communication. Safety in our lives is the number one concern."

Poitras, from the Muscowpetung First Nation, is a visual artist with a mixed medium.

"I do all sorts of creating and my guilty pleasure would have to be beading and sewing," she said.

Poitras says the role of Indigenous-two-spirit artists is one she and her wife take seriously.

"Art gives us the opportunity to address these complex issues in society," she said. "It's a platform to express that two-spirit artists are important, and their work needs to be valued."

To be part of a very public month-long display was an opportunity the couple couldn't pass up.

"The art exhibition is to have Indigenous artists' work be seen (and) this visual assurance helps validate the importance of the work," she said.

Poitras says Prosper has been a real blessing because together they find

strength in one another.

"It's been a really emotional experience," she said.

Poitras has been very public about her relationship and embraced the role of being a two-spirit ambassador is something she's been able to do because of the support she gets from Prosper.

"I believe Indigenous people have a long way to go in the healing process," she said. "There's been this real breakdown in understanding the two-spirit community, the queer (and) Indigi-queer community, and I feel these voices are important in art."

Poitras says this lack of understanding can be traced back to residential schools.

It's a sentiment shared by Prosper.

"Too many Indigenous women are targeted, never mind adding two-spirit to it all," she said.

However the couple is determined to continue to live their lives to the fullest.

"We work together to make our lives comfortable and content," said Prosper. "We live sober lives. We work hard for everything we have. We support one another. We build this life not only for ourselves but for our children and grandchildren."

Poitras said Prosper helps her excel as an artist and their latest collaboration is a prime example.

"It's been a really amazing journey," she said.



Cheryl Prosper (left) and Paulete Poitras (right), a two-spirit married couple, use art to express themselves and raise awareness about the two-spirit community. (Photo supplied)

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Sponsored Content



Pictured: Pro Metals Industries and PFN Group of Companies presents cheques to Saskatchewan Polytechnic, University of Saskatchewan, SIIT, and First Nations University of Canada.

Pasqua First Nation Creates Legacy for Indigenous Post-Secondary Students with Feather Project

By: Kelsey No Runner, for PFN Group of Companies & Pro Metal Industries

Last summer as unmarked graves were discovered near Indian Residential School sites across the country, PFN Group of Companies, owned by Pasqua First Nation (PFN), understood that the first step to honouring Indian Residential School (IRS) victims and survivors is acknowledging the past.

Pro Metal Industries is 100 per cent owned by PFN, and is Western Canada's premier precision metal fabrication specialist located in Regina Saskatchewan. As a leading manufacturer for big industries such as agriculture, oil and gas, and military and defence.

"With the news of the unmarked graves being discovered through the summer, it was hard on the team and we wanted to do something meaningful," says Mark Brown, President of Pro Metal Industries. "We had a lot of organizations and individuals reach out to us, wanting to get involved in intentional and meaningful action to address the history of IRS."

Utilizing their expertise in metal fabrication, Pro Metal produced a limited edition, Every Child Matters Eagle Feather, originally designed by artist Jonas Thomson from Carry the Kettle Nakoda Nation.

"We wanted to help with the healing process, and leave a legacy for Indigenous people affected by IRS, and ensure the discovery of the unmarked graves are not forgotten,"

says Brown. "We thought it's going to be six months before we sell out the 1,000 feathers we produced. It sold out in two weeks, and we were able to raise \$75,000."

Pro Metal released an additional 1,000 feathers that sold out in three weeks, and in total their efforts raised \$125,000.

In consultation with PFN leadership and elders, it was decided that all proceeds from the sales would go back to Indigenous people pursuing post-secondary education.

"When the project concept was developed, our intent was not to profit from the heart-breaking discoveries," says Treena Amyotte, business development manager for PFN Group of Companies. "Our goal was to create awareness about the history of Residential Schools, ensuring this metal feather would be a conversation piece for years to come. The feather also gave the broader public an opportunity to show their support, as many non-Indigenous people wanted to do something but didn't know how," she says.

"We also wanted the funds to be directed towards survivors of residential schools and their descendants and we know the effect of residential schools are experienced beyond the borders of Pasqua First Nation."

Impact for Indigenous Post-Secondary Students

The feather project is a bursary that ranged from \$2,000 to \$2,500 and was given to Indigenous students at the University of Regina, University of Saskatchewan, First Nations University of Canada, Saskatchewan Indian Institute of Technologies (SIIT), and Saskatchewan Polytechnic.

Dr. Vickie Lamb Drover, Associate Vice President of Operations & Advancement at SIIT says that working with PFN on the allocation of the bursaries made a difference to every student that received a bursary, regardless of what program they were in.

"PFN gave us the freedom and the trust to ensure these funds got to students in need, where this bursary would make a huge difference to their academic success. These bursaries reduced barriers. Our students have all the skills to meet their academic goals, sometimes they just need a little help to take the pressure off other areas like childcare, housing, food security, or tutoring. These bursaries helped alleviate those pressures."

Reila Bird is the director of Indigenous Continuing Education Centre at First Nations University of Canada. She says that she is humbled by the generosity that PFN has provided to Indigenous students.

"All of our students come to us from different places with different family

dynamics, and levels of understanding of what they want to do with their careers. There's so much complexity and costs associated with attending University. \$2,500 is a lot of money to a student. That's two months of rent. That's food for children. That's fixing or buying a car that can get them to and from school. Student life is not easy and it's getting harder everyday."

"Our students are very fortunate to have PFN Group of Companies provide support and assistance for our students who not only need it, but deserve recognition for the work they are putting into their studies."

Next Steps

PFN and Pro Metal will continue the feather project to commemorate IRS victims and survivors, and in turn support Indigenous students attending post-secondary in Saskatchewan.

"PFN group of companies strives to create economic and business opportunities that support Pasqua's growth and development," says Amyotte. "We are looking for ways to leverage our existing partnerships and future partnerships to support what's happening in Pasqua."

Pro Metal will be collaborating with the original feather artist to create a new metal design that will be available for the public to purchase starting in July.



For more information, visit: prometal.ca/feathers/