

Reconciliation Statement for OSAC

OSAC's work and support reach lands covered by Treaties 2, 4, 5, 6, 8, and 10, the traditional lands of the Cree, Dakota, Dene, Lakota, Nakota, and Saulteaux peoples, as well as the homeland of the Métis. We honor the enduring relationships Indigenous peoples have with these lands, waters, and skies.

As an organization dedicated to fostering connections through the performing and visual arts, we commit to advancing truth and reconciliation. We recognize the devastating impacts of colonization, including residential schools and systemic inequities that persist to this day. Arts and culture define the stories of our lives, and we recognize the deep importance of this work in the reconciliation process. We stand in solidarity with Indigenous communities and are committed to being active participants in the reconciliation process.

Our Commitments Include:

1. Respectful Relationships (TRC Call to Action #92)

- Fostering respectful and meaningful partnerships with Indigenous artists, communities, and organizations.
- Engaging in open dialogue to better understand and amplify Indigenous voices in the arts.

Past examples:

In 2023, OSAC invited Arts Council member Ray Keighley to become our Knowledge Keeper in Residence, we are honoured that he accepted. Ray is a Cree/Métis artist and Arts Council member on the Warman Arts Council. Ray has helped guide the OSAC Board and Staff during Showcase, as well as Board meetings. His advice and knowledge continue to help the organization. From bringing greetings to those attending Showcase to talking to the Board about his life and art including his recent work as a wood carver. You can learn more about Ray, and his art [here](#)



Through our Visual Arts touring program in the last 5 years, OSAC has worked with Catherine Blackburn, Katherine Boyer, Phyllis Poitras-Jarrett, Donna Langhorne, Tim Moore, Leah Marie Dorion, Melanie Monique Rose, Stacey Fayant, Marcy Friesen, Larissa Kitchemonia, Brandy Jones, Audie Murray, John Brady McDonald, Sally Milne, Brandon Roy,

Cherelle Williams, Audra Blais-Boulianne, Maureen Ledoux, Russel Iron, Elaine McArthur, Jordy Ironstar, John Halkett, Molly Ratt, Myles Charles, Nancy LeFleur, Sammi Kopeck, Abigail Clarke (Mokwa Iskewsis), Jade Roberts, and Jasmine Grondin, showcasing their work in touring exhibitions across Saskatchewan.

In our Performing Arts in Schools touring program, OSAC has collaborated with Kung Jaadee, Dallas Arcand, Terrence Littlelent, and Axis theatre to perform in communities like Ile La Crosse, Buffalo Narrows, Green Lake, La Ronge, Stanley Mission, Duck Lake, Kahkewistahaw First Nation, and Pinehouse Lake.

In our Performing Arts touring program, OSAC has worked in partnership with LJ Tyson, Kyle McKearney, Susan Aglukark, Dallas Arcand, Diyet & The Love Soldiers, Twin Flames, Blue Moon Marquee, and the North Sound.

Looking Forward:

We commit to strengthening partnerships with Indigenous artists and communities to co-create meaningful, culturally informed artistic experiences.

We look forward to touring performers Kyle McKearney, Teagan Littlechief, The North Sound, and Axis Theatre with "Where Have All the Buffalo Gone" Written by Tai Amy Grauman. On the visual arts side, we are excited to tour Vanessa Hyggen's "ôma askiy âpacihiçikâtiw (this land is in use)", and part 2 of the wildly successful "Tepakohp (Uçd)" curated by Melanie Monique Rose.

OSAC is finalizing an Indigenous songwriting workshop in partnership with Kyle McKearny, the Saskatchewan Indigenous Music Association and the Melfort Arts Council in 2026.

2. Education and Awareness (TRC Calls to Action #57, #63, #67, #83, #93)

- Providing opportunities for our members, staff, and partners to learn about the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action, as well as the histories, cultures, and contributions of Indigenous Peoples.
- Ensuring our programs reflect and celebrate the diversity of Saskatchewan, with special emphasis on the richness of Indigenous arts and culture.

Past Examples:

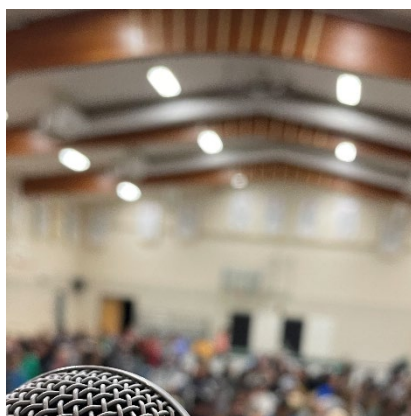
Artists touring as part of our Performing Arts program have occasionally faced forms of racism in communities, both overt and subtle. OSAC has reached out to our member groups to encourage them to have conversations with the community leaders to make them aware of these situations, as well as talking to Indigenous or Two Spirit artists about locations in their community they may wish to avoid. While racism is difficult to stop, OSAC looks to continue working with our members and their communities to keep artists comfortable and safe. SaskCulture is also looking at ways to bring this education to the larger cultural sector through the groups that they provide funding to.

Fire Keepers Indigenous Song Circle

In October 2023, OSAC partnered with the Manitoba Arts Network to present Fire Keepers Indigenous Song Circle, created by Troy Kokol of the group Scarlett Butler.

Troy spearheaded the project and collaborated to bring the other artists on board. OSAC contributed administrative time and outreach to communities in Saskatchewan to place these performances, as well as additional financial assistance to help with accommodations while the tour was on the road. The tour included performances at two First Nations communities: Whitecap Dakota Nation and Kahkewistahaw. A third performance took place in Kindersley at an elementary school.

The Fire Keepers Indigenous Song Circle Tour



ignited stages across Saskatchewan and Manitoba, featuring a dynamic ensemble of artists at various stages of their careers. This inspiring tour included multi-award-winning Indigenous artists Don Amero and Scarlett Butler, alongside emerging talents Ethan Lyric and Dale Mac. From October 10 to 19, the tour traveled through municipalities in Saskatchewan and Manitoba, offering unforgettable musical experiences.

The Fire Keepers Indigenous Song Circle Tour is an initiative dedicated to assisting, inspiring, and empowering Indigenous artists from remote

communities who aspire to pursue careers in music. The tour brought together accomplished Indigenous artists and emerging talents in each region.

Tepakohp (U<dʷ), John Brady McDonald: Omentum, and Atim Maskikhiy

From 2022 to 2024, OSAC toured *Tepakohp (U<dʷ)*, a multi-artist exhibition that celebrated the stories and experiences of the many Nations of Indigenous Women living on this land we call Saskatchewan. "We share our stories through our art to amplify, inspire and educate about the diverse relationships and transactions we have to this land and each other."- Curator Melanie Monique Rose. The exhibition featured artists Audie Murray, Larissa Kitchemonia, Donna Langhorne, Stacey Fayant, Marcy Friesen, Brandy Jones, & Melanie Monique Rose.



Artist/curator Melanie Monique Rose presenting an artist talk for the November Prairie Rivers Reconciliation Circle (PRRC) Meeting at Station Arts Centre in Rosthern.

Omentum is a series of 10 paintings that touch on several of the major experiences faced by Indigenous people in this country within recent memory. These paintings, influenced by the works of both Norval Morrisseau and also Pablo Picasso, speak to some of the major



John Brady McDonald gives an artist talk at the Sherven-Smith Gallery in Melfort.

struggles and triumphs that are part of the everyday life as Indigenous people, such as the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Cultural Appropriation, the legacy of Residential Schools, the Rise and Honour of the Two-Spirited in the LGBTQ, the Return of Traditional Indigenous Tattooing, the Rise in Systemic Racism Online, and, the Murder of Colten Boushie. What makes these paintings truly unique is that each one has been personally named, not by McDonald, but by an influential Indigenous or Métis artist, activist, or leader, such as Isaac Murdoch, Rosanna Deerchild,

the members of PIQSIQ, Debbie Baptiste- the mother of Colten Boushie, a co-founder of Idle No More, and Dr. Evan Adams, (who played "Thomas" in the film "Smoke Signals"). Each of these individuals, who are at the forefront of the issues for which these paintings were

created, graciously donated a name which they personally felt best suited the narrative of the painting.



Photo by Brandon White

Atim Maskikhiy ('Dog Medicine' in Cree) is a foundational non-traditional partnership between OSAC and the Western College of Veterinary Medicine and its many academic and community partners. This exhibition presents works of seventeen artists local to the La Ronge tri-community area in Northern Saskatchewan. The multimedia pieces represent the artists' interpretations of the dog-human relationship as expressed through preliminary findings of a

community-driven research project conducted in the community. This exhibition broadens the scope of curatorial partnerships and community generated issue-responsive artworks. We eagerly anticipate presenting more exhibitions of this nature in the future. In a special partnership with the Wanuskewin Institute, Western College of Veterinary Medicine, Saskatchewan Centre for Patient-Oriented Research (SCPOR), Saskatchewan Health Research



Photo by Brandon White

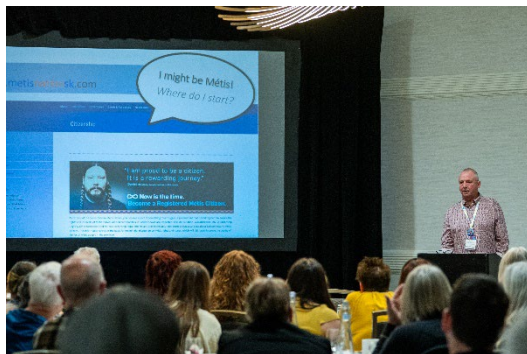
Foundation, Northern Animal Rescue, Lac La Ronge Indian Band, Town of La Ronge, and the Village of Air Ronge, OSAC was thrilled to co-present the opening reception and artist talks for *Atim Maskikhiy* and Wanuskewin in January of 2024. This event highlighted many of the artists featured in the exhibition who travelled from the La Ronge tri-communities to participate in a presentation about the project and speak to their work. This exhibition is curated by Dr. Jordan Woodsworth, Director – Northern Engagement and Community Outreach, Western College of Veterinary Medicine. The artists featured in this exhibition are Andrea Cowan, Caron Dubnick, Donna Langhorne, Hilary Johnstone, John Halkett, Larissa Muirhead, Miriam Körner, Molly Ratt, Myles Charles, Nancy Lafleur, Terri Franks, Sammi Kopeck, Abigail Clarke, Annalisa Heppner, Jade Roberts, Jasmine Grondin, and Wendy Cleveland. This exhibition will tour until 2027.

Kung Jaadee toured with OSAC's Performing Arts in Schools program, she is a professional storyteller, educator and published author belonging to the Haida, Musqueam and Squamish First Nations. Her Haida name, Kung Jaadee, means 'Moon Woman' and was presented to her at her great uncle's memorial feast by her cousin Crystal Robinson. Over

the past 30 years, Kung Jaadee has performed traditional Haida legends, while also sharing vivid personal stories about her clan's survival of the smallpox epidemic, and the history and culture of her people. Kung Jaadee gave a live storytelling performance for students K-12, sharing Haida stories and Squamish stories that incorporated famous legends and traditional songs and regalia. She has performed at hundreds of festivals, schools and Aboriginal celebrations across Canada. She is the author of the popular children's books, *Raven's Feast*, *Gifts From Raven*, (selected as a Local BC Book to Read), *Indigenous Communities in Canada: Haida Nation* and *Haida Gwaii: We Are Home*.



Our annual conference **Showcase** offers the chance for Arts Council members, Board, and Staff to participate in workshops and talks like “The Metis; Forgotten No More” – John Lagimodiere, Indigenous Advisory”, Dale McArthur, and “The Exchange” – Dr. Terri-Lynn Brennan & Judy Harquail.



Showcase 2024

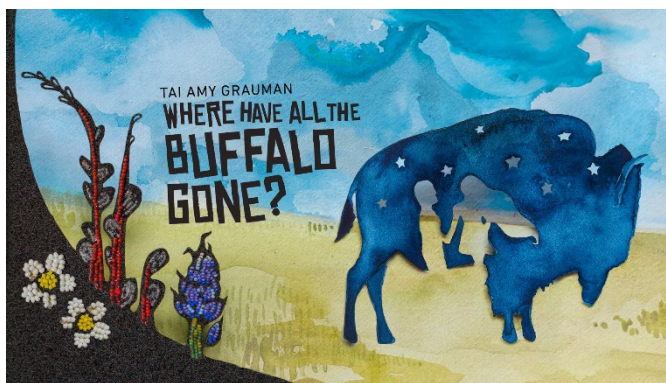
Workshop “The Metis; Forgotten No More” – John Lagimodiere, ACS Aboriginal Consulting Services

OSAC hosted a **Land Acknowledgement Workshop**, facilitated by Annie Battiste, Office of the Treaty Commissioner in March 2025. This virtual session provided participants with the opportunity to learn the basics of treaty land acknowledgements and the different components across Canada that could be added. OSAC was grateful to have worked with the Office of the Treaty Commissioner.



Commissioner to provide this insightful workshop. This workshop is free for our Arts Council members and will be attended by Board and Staff as well.

Axis Theatre from BC is touring in Fall 2026 to schools across Saskatchewan with ***Where Have All the Buffalo Gone?*** Written by Tai Amy Grauman: *Where Have All The Buffalo Gone?* follows two Métis souls through seven different periods of Métis history. We bear witness to the emergence of the Métis nations across the plains, the robust colonization that arises from the fur trade, the disappearance of the buffalo and the political uprising of the Métis Association of Alberta. The story begins during creation amongst the stars and ends in the present day. *Where Have All The Buffalo Gone?* is inspired by scenarios from the Callihoo family's stories – direct descendants of the playwright. We incorporate fiddle music, jigging and a life like buffalo puppet. This original play for young audiences explores the loves, the losses, and the fight of Treaty 6's Métis people – and their love and kinship to the buffalo.



In 2025/ 2026 we will have tours by Indigenous artists **Kyle McKearney, Teagan Littlechief** and **The North Sound** totalling 20 performances.



Teagan Littlechief at Showcase 2024

In 2025 **Vanessa Hyggen's** *ôma askiy âpaciĥcikâtîw (this land is in use)* will begin touring. We will also begin working on *Tepakohp (U<d'')* part 2.



Vanessa Hyggen, *Marsh cinquefoil*, miyuki beads on pellon, 8" x 8" 2022

3. Action and Accountability (TRC Call to Action #57, #83, #93)

- Incorporating the principles of reconciliation into our organizational policies and programming.
- Regularly assessing our progress and ensuring transparency in our efforts.

Examples:

Land Acknowledgment Protocols: Including a meaningful land acknowledgment in all meetings, events, and publications, and ensuring it is delivered with authenticity and understanding.

Curated Indigenous Arts experiences: we commit to continue to tour exhibitions and performances that spotlight Indigenous artists, showcasing both traditional and contemporary art forms.

Collaborative Program Development: Co-creating programs with Indigenous artists and curators like Melanie Monique Rose in *Tepakohp* (U^{<d'''}) and Troy Kokol in *Fire Keepers Indigenous Song Circle* to ensure authentic representation and mutual benefit.

Education and Outreach: Partnering with Indigenous Elders and Knowledge Keepers to offer workshops or public lectures: *Land Acknowledgement Workshop*, facilitated by Annie Battiste, *Indigenous Partnered Programming Grant* offered through the Visual Arts Program Grants, *Where Have All the Buffalo Gone?* by Tai Amy Grauman School tour.

Our database is now programmed to allow the use of the Cree language on our website.

Looking Forward:

This Reconciliation Statement is a living document, we will continue to regularly review our reconciliation efforts and share our progress publicly, inviting feedback from Indigenous partners and the broader community.

We believe that reconciliation is a shared journey, and the arts have a unique role to play in fostering understanding, connection, and healing. Through intentional actions and collaboration, we aim to build a future where all communities feel valued and represented in Saskatchewan's cultural landscape.

We invite our members, partners, and communities to walk with us on this path toward reconciliation. To reference the 94 Calls To Action please visit [Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action](#)