



Kick Start Arts - Artistic Director's Note

Core to our mandate at Kick Start Arts is a clear vision that the arts are a powerful modality for connection, social justice, and understanding across cultures. We are artist-seekers, and we hope that the creation of this kit - so carefully and lovingly created by the contributors, will serve as a starting point for conversation, for questioning, for creation, and ultimately for connection across many diversities both in and out of school settings. I would like to thank Shelley MacDonald, and Paula Wing for leading this project - it has taken many, many months to create - and they did it with love, patience, and such beautiful intention.

It would simply not have been possible to create this without the wisdom and support of Nk'xetko Ntle'kepmx, Cole J. Alves, Robert Clifton/Liimiiuum Hala'ayt, and Candace Maracle. We are beyond grateful to you for all your insight, discernment, and integrity. Working with, and learning from all of you has been such a highlight of this year. I thank you all for your honesty, and openness, and for the challenges that lead us to deeper understanding.

- **Sheena D. Robertson**, Artistic Director

The Team for the Reconcili-Action Kit

Shelley MacDonald

Shelley is an award winning performing artist, filmmaker and artist educator who is of Mi'kmaq (Ugpi'Ganjig," Eel River New Brunswick) and Scottish Ancestry. She has spent the last 25 years working across Turtle Island collaborating with different school districts, universities, artists, Elders, television networks, film productions and community organizations both in person and virtually. She is passionate about creating meaningful arts and culture experiences that focus on social justice issues to help create systemic change. She believes that the arts are a way of bringing people together and a bridge to reconciling our shared history to create a brighter future for all. Shelley is a committed Ancestor in training.

Paula Wing

Paula is a playwright, actor, translator, and facilitator. She has been exploring the world artistically for more than 20 years. She adores working with the fresh minds and unparalleled creativity of young people. Nothing makes her happier than serving their visions, in the classroom or in community. She is flexible, responsive, inspired by collaboration and up for whatever ambles along. Her many cherished collaborators say they like working with her because they laugh a lot, there are never any mistakes (only informative digressions), and

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there's room for all voices. For more than 20 years, Paula taught across Canada and internationally for Learning Through the Arts at the Royal Conservatory. She is a Teaching Artist with Kick Start Arts, where she designs and delivers innovative and engaging arts-infused programs students. Paula has facilitated a Creative Writing and Storytelling Class for 10 years at the Native Men's Residence in Toronto with their Sagatay Program.

Nk'xetko Ntle'kepmx

Nk'xetko is a singer, drummer, storyteller, quilter and a survivor of the Kamloops Indian Residential School. She discovered that traditional culture, language and the arts have been like medicine that brings healing. A trained teacher with her Masters In Education, she not only lectures on Indigenous history, residential school life and traditional culture, she assists in lesson planning and curriculum development. She is proud to be an Elder in Residence for the Royal Conservatory's Learning through the Arts Program and Langara College. Nk'xetko enjoys teaching her three grandchildren cultural crafts, story, songs and dances to make the circle complete.

Cole J. Alves

Cole is a Michif (Métis) theatre artist based in Tkaron:to with Chippewa, Irish, and English heritage from the Turtle Mountains. They are a leader of lemonTree creations, manidoons collective, Ad Hoc Assembly, and ran the Indigenous Performing Arts Alliance from 2013-2017. Recently, they performed in (Canadian Opera Company/National Arts *Louis Riel bug Lilies; Or the Revival of the Romantic Drama* Centre), and directed the Dora nominated by Yolanda Bonnell (manidoons collective/Luminato), as well as Bouchard (lemontree creations, Why Not Theatre, Buddies in Bad Times Theatre). Next, they co-direct with Michael Greyeyes (Plains Cree) *Two Odysseys: Pimootewin / Gállábártnit*, Indigenous music drama with librettos by Tomson Highway (Cree) and Rawdna Carita-Eira (Sami), respectively, produced by Signal Theatre and Soundstreams

Robert Clifton/LiimiiuumHala'ayt: RobertClifton/LiimiiuumHalya'at(SingingShaman)

Robert comes from two worlds: On his father's side, he descended from the Gitga'at people of the Tsimshian Nation and from his mother's side he is a third generation settler from Norway. Learning how to negotiate these two different worldviews has helped him to bridge understanding in diverse ways of knowing and being. Robert was the Indigenous Education Curriculum Consultant for the Vancouver School Board for 5 years. After graduating from the NITEP program at UBC, Robert taught elementary school for 20+ years before bringing his skills and passion for teaching and innovative pedagogical approaches to his role at the Vancouver School Board. His life experience has been rooted in the arts; having sung, performed, and danced on several local stages in his youth. Robert values the power of the arts as they were integral to developing a positive self-identity. After completing his Masters of Educational Technology at UBC, he joined the Indigenous Education Faculty in September 2021.

Candace Maracle

Candace is Wolf Clan from Tyendinaga Mohawk Territory. An award-winning filmmaker and journalist, she graduated with her master's degree in journalism from Ryerson University where she received the CanWest Scholarship for Aboriginal Youth in Broadcast Journalism. Her work as a journalist includes reporting for the APTN's National News and producing for CBC Radio's "The Current" and "As It Happens." Her first documentary, *The Creator's Game: The Quest for Gold and the Fight for Nationhood* addresses the issue of Indigenous sovereignty through the game of lacrosse. It was screened at numerous film festivals across Turtle Island and was nominated at the Red Nation International Film Festival 2020 in Los Angeles. Candace regularly speaks on Reporting in Indigenous Communities and has also helped her alma mater develop curriculum for a new course.

A Word About the Illustrations

After MUCH deliberation about how we would create the illustrations, we decided to ask Nancy Ciccone to paint one image for each of the cards. Nancy is not Indigenous, but as we have talked a lot about Reconciliation being an *action* that must come from those of us who are not Indigenous, this felt like a good place for us to start. Nancy was a lead collaborating artist on a reconciliation project Kick Start Arts facilitated in the summer of 2019, and we knew she would bring a lot of thought and integrity to her design. The drafts were vetted by both Elder Nk'xetko, and Robert Clifton. Paula, Sheena and Shelley were also part of the team collaborating on colour and design directions.

