KANATA

CONTEMPORARY INDIGENOUS ARTISTS & THEIR MUSIC

TEACHER RESOURCE GUIDE

Part 1: Introductory Material

By Sherryl Sewepagaham

musicounts Learn

Canada

INTRODUCTION

Teachers across Canada have expressed an interest and desire to bring to their students Indigenous resources that are authentic, respectful, culturally appropriate, meaningful, informative, and features the music of Indigenous artists in Canada. This is why MusiCounts brought together Indigenous artists and educators to create a new resource that will empower any music or social studies educator to explore contemporary Indigenous music in the classroom.

Kanata: Contemporary Indigenous Artists and their Music Teacher Resource Guide is a listening and inquiry-based resource. It is designed specifically for teachers with students in grades 7-12 in remote, rural, and urban schools across Canada, regardless of music education training or formal music background. This resource is intended to be used by *all* grade 7-12 teachers who wish to explore the music of contemporary Indigenous artists from a uniquely Indigenous perspective. Most importantly, the aim of *Kanata* is to introduce students to dynamic contemporary Indigenous artists from Canada whose music can be added to their favourite playlists while they learn and understand that Indigenous music is not locked in the past, but is a living, evolving practice with many diverse sounds and genres.

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OVERVIEW
Kanata Part 1

Part 1 of *Kanata* is devoted to equipping educators and students with some of the knowledge needed to study the music of the Snotty Nose Rez Kids, Silla and Rise and Jeremy Dutcher. In order to present a broad perspective and understanding of Indigenous Peoples in Canada to students, teachers will need to prepare and familiarize themselves with definitions of Indigenous Peoples and other background information relevant to the teacher resource, the evolution of Indigenous music, specific terminology, the JUNO Awards category, and issues that impact Indigenous artists and their communities.

We strongly encourage you to take the time to familiarize yourself and your students with some of this information before proceeding to *Kanata* Part 2, which includes all the students activities.

To supplement this written material, three Indigenous educators involved with the development of this resource have created an **Introductory Video** that summarizes some of the key things discussed in *Kanata* Part 1. Please use this resource to educate yourself and your students about the history of Indigenous peoples and their music.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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ARTISTS

Jeremy Dutcher

Snotty Nose Rez Kids (Quinton "Yung Trybez" Nyce and Darren "Young D" Metz)

Silla and Rise (Charlotte Qamaniq, Cynthia Pitsiulak and Eric Vani)

THE WRITER

Sherryl Sewepagaham is Cree-Dene from the Little Red River Cree Nation in northern Alberta and holds a BEd from the University of Alberta and a BMT from Capilano University. She is an experienced K-6 music teacher, music therapist, and is a recognized Cree traditional hand drum singer. Sherryl is a founding member of the highly successful Indigenous women's trio Asani, who released two award-winning albums, including a 2010 Canadian Folk Music Award win and a 2006 JUNO Award nomination. Sherryl completed the Orff-Schulwerk certification and continues to create First Nations activities, songs and curriculum programs. She also composes Cree choral repertoire for choirs and directed two Indigenous children's choirs. Sherryl composed the theme song, "Music Alive," for the National Arts Centre's Music Alive Program and created and co-created three Indigenous Arts Teacher Guides for the program.

IN DEDICATION

I dedicate this resource to my parents William and Emily Sewepagaham, who were my first teachers, my Cree family, my Nation, and the many Elders and knowledge keepers that have supported and guided me throughout my career. I am grateful to everyone that taught me stories, teachings, ceremonies, principles, language, and about traditional songs and the sacred drum. All of these teachings define who I am today. Without this knowledge, my participation in this resource could never have been possible.

INDIGENOUS PEOPLES IN CANADA

***Important note:**

This resource contains highly sensitive but important information about the negative impacts of historical and intergenerational trauma caused by Canada's Residential Schools and the Sixties Scoop on Indigenous peoples. Please be mindful and compassionate when approaching this topic as it may be triggering to students whose families have been directly affected. Please also ensure that school counsellors and Elders are available for any students who may require support.

The Indigenous Peoples in Canada are the First Nations, Métis, and Inuit.

First Nations - is a term referring to all Indians, whether status or non-status, as well as to their communities. Although it is not defined in the Indian Act, it is now used in most modern Canadian statutes (e.g., *An Act respecting First Nations, Inuit and Métis children, youth and families*).

Métis - there are different ways of defining Métis identity as persons whose ancestors inhabited western and northern Canada and received land grants and/or scrip. That is, they are descendants of the historic Métis nation. A broader definition includes all persons of mixed Indigenous and non-Indigenous ancestry who identify themselves as Métis. In its 2003 *Powley* decision, the Supreme Court of Canada suggested that three broad indicators of Métis identity are self-identification, ancestral connection and community acceptance.

Inuit - the circumpolar people living primarily in the Inuvialuit Settlement Region (northern Yukon and Northwest Territories), Nunavut, Nunavik (in northern Québec) and Nunatsiavut (in northern Labrador). In Inuktitut, "Inuit" means "the people". Therefore, the expression "Inuit people" should be avoided. "Inuk" is the singular form of "Inuit" and is used when referring to a single individual. Inuit were historically referred to as "Eskimos", a term that is considered derogatory.

*This resource will include older documents that use the term "Aboriginal" and "Indian."

Please also see the appendix at the end of this document for a full glossary of terms used throughout Part 1 and Part 2 of the *Kanata* resource.

For more helpful terminology and definitions, visit:

- hillnotes.ca/2020/05/20/indigenous-peoples-terminology-guide/
- indigenousfoundations.arts.ubc.ca/terminology/

RESIDENTIAL SCHOOLS

Beginning in 1884, First Nations, Métis and Inuit (Indigenous) children were forcibly removed from their homes, separated from their families and put into residential schools. Residential schools were government-funded, church-run schools designed to eliminate parental involvement in the intellectual, cultural, and spiritual development of Indigenous children. More than 150,000 children attended these schools. Most children were forbidden to speak the languages they knew and were only allowed to speak English or French. Collected reports and documents estimate over 6,000 children died and never returned home. In 1996, Gordon Residential School in Punnichy, Saskatchewan was the last residential school that closed and was demolished marking the end of the Residential School era.

SIXTIES SCOOP

The Sixties Scoop refers to the practice of "scooping up" Indigenous children from their families and communities and placing them into Canadian provincial child welfare agencies. This resulted in the mass removal of thousands of Indigenous children who were subsequently adopted out to white families from across Canada, the United States, and internationally in some cases. What started in the mid-1950s and lasted into the 80s was a series of policies enacted by child welfare authorities that caused children to lose their names, languages, and their connection to their heritage.

THE APOLOGY

On Wednesday, June 11, 2008, the former Prime Minister of Canada, the Right Honourable Stephen Harper, made a Statement of Apology to former students of Indian Residential Schools, on behalf of the Government of Canada.

THE TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION COMMISSION OF CANADA (TRC)

In 2015, the TRC published its final report detailing the experiences and impacts of residential schools and the legacy of colonialism still in place today. 94 Calls to Action recommendations were made. The calls were intended to address what had happened in those schools and what had happened in Canada. When we fully listen and acknowledge the harm done to Indigenous peoples through these systems, then we can begin to move forward together repairing and building positive and caring relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Canadians. Reconciliation can be a small step that begins with YOU. Here is a great summary of why reconciliation matters from the Legacy of Hope Foundation:


Brown-Skinned Babies, Too, Need Loving

These Children Are Looking For A Home They May Never Find

Raymond Baptiste Ruth Chartrand Grace Godfrey Eddy Courchene

by CLARE MARCUS

WHY IT MATTERS

Why is this issue important to all Canadians? Why should it matter to those who didn't attend residential school?

IT MATTERS because it continues to affect First Nations, Inuit, and Métis families – people from vibrant cultures who are vital contributors to Canadian society.

IT MATTERS because it happened here, in a country we call our own – a land considered by many to be a world leader in democracy and human rights.

IT MATTERS because the Residential School System is one of the major causes of the disproportionate levels of poverty, homelessness, substance abuse, and violence experienced by Indigenous Peoples – devastating conditions that are felt and experienced by our neighbours, friends, and community members.

IT MATTERS because Indigenous communities suffer levels of poverty, illness, and illiteracy comparable to those in developing nations.

IT MATTERS because we share this land. We may not be responsible for what happened in the past, but all non-Indigenous Peoples benefit from what First Nations, Inuit, and Métis have had to relinquish. We are responsible for our actions today.

From *We Were So Far Away – Legacy of Hope Foundation*

HELPFUL WEBSITES FOR FURTHER KNOWLEDGE AND INTEREST

- Indigenous Peoples Atlas of Canada
- Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) of Canada - Resources for Students and Teachers
- The TRC's Calls to Action
- The Indian Act
- Indigenous Languages Act (SC 2019, c. 23)

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE EVOLUTION OF INDIGENOUS MUSIC IN CANADA

We suggest you begin this teaching resource with this section on the brief history of the evolution of Indigenous music in Canada. This is to gain a general overview of early Indigenous music, historical events that oppressed music and expression, to contemporary music and artists of today. It Must also be understood that there is also a rich and vibrant diversity and uniqueness within songs, ceremonies and teachings held with every tribe, nation, and clan across Canada. This overview is of course very general, and is only meant to serve as a starting point.

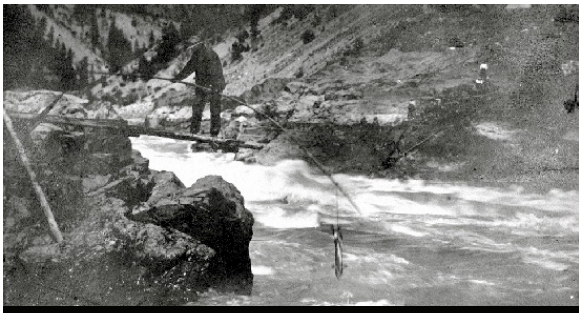
ORIGINS OF SONG

Prior to European **colonization**, First Nations and Inuit songs were shared and passed on through the **oral tradition**. Music was never written on paper or recorded by the people themselves. Instead, **Elders**, culture bearers, **knowledge keepers**, and song holders (also sometimes called song makers/keepers) recognized as having these roles, stored countless songs in their memory and sang songs during ceremonies, events and celebrations throughout the seasons. Each song had a purpose, an intention, a deep meaning and teachings that reflected the language and voices of the Elders and ancestors and instilled a meaningful connection to the land and to oneself. Songs were shared with those who earned the songs through family lineage or for specific First Nations groups, **protocol** was offered, and singers were dedicated to lifelong learning. Many songs were sacred and spiritual and were only sung and heard by those attending the ceremonies and prayers. Other songs were sung to a wider audience at celebrations and during games with many family or community members listening, watching, and participating. Inuit throat-singers would create personal songs for family members (e.g., lullabies) and sing them for their own families. They didn't perform these publicly because they had personal meaning and they did not have permission to share them.

The Northern Cree Singers

Elder Joseph Crowshoe, Sr. and female Elder

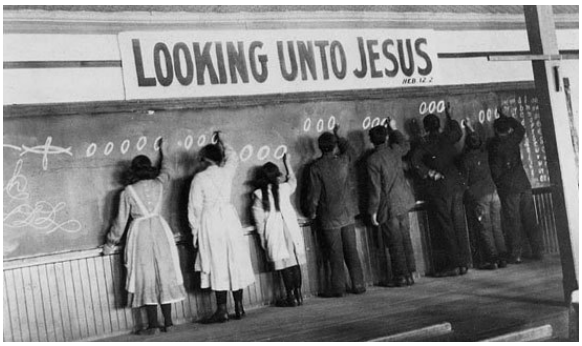
Sage smudging



First Nations salmon fisherman

Inuit girls throat-singing

Tlicho handgames



PURPOSEFUL SONGS

Other songs sung with purpose were hunting songs, paddling and travelling songs, battle songs, berry-picking songs, courting songs, feasting songs, honour songs, songs for dancing, lullabies and more. Inuit katajjaq songs, commonly known as throat-singing, imitate sounds of nature and are personal songs that people relate to. A ja ja songs are personal songs that bring back a vocal memory such as loneliness. Hide drums and rattles, shakers of many sizes, shapes and designs, (contents could include: pebbles, sand, beans, rice, pellets) with animal skins covering wood frames and handles accompanied the songs. Quilaut, a traditional Inuit drum created in various sizes and styles (Atlantic and Greenlandic), was made of caribou or nylon around a wooden frame tied with string. The flute was also carved from wood and played beautiful, haunting and uplifting melodies. Sticks and animal bones were used in handgames or bone or stick games, such as Inukat (Inuit) and Slahal (Pacific Northwest Coast).

THE ACT OF SILENCE: THE BRITISH NORTH AMERICA ACT AND RESIDENTIAL SCHOOLS

The British North America (BNA) Act passed in 1867 set the stage for The Indian Act of 1876, and the era of colonization and forced assimilation prohibited and made it illegal for Indigenous people to practice their ceremonies, which included singing and dancing. Aboriginal (Indigenous) children were forcibly removed from their homes, separated from their families and put into Indian residential schools beginning in 1884. Residential schools were government-funded, church-run schools that were designed to eliminate parental involvement in the intellectual, cultural, and spiritual development of Aboriginal children. More than 150,000 children attended these schools. Children were forbidden to speak the languages they knew and were only allowed to speak English or French. Over time, many songs were lost and many “high” or “old” language words disappeared completely with the passing of the Elders and song holders. However, countless songs were hidden underground within

communities and families and languages were quietly spoken. An amendment to the Indian Act in 1951 removed sections that restricted customs and culture from being practiced and Indigenous people began major efforts to revitalize preserved songs, traditions, ceremonies, and languages. In 1996, Gordon Residential School in Punnichy, Saskatchewan was the last residential school that closed and was demolished marking the end of the Residential School era.

THE FIDDLE AND THE JIG

The arrival of Europeans brought new instruments and new music influences. The Inuit were introduced to the accordion and mouth harp by Scottish whalers. Métis culture blends elements from both traditions but is very different from both. The "Red River Jig'' is an example of Métis music and is often used as an anthem for traditional Métis music. Métis fiddle music played on steel strings and folk songs reflecting hardships and victories such as the Red River Rebellion flourished to become a distinct sound for the Métis.

INTERWOVEN SOUNDS

Today, First Nations, Métis, and Inuit artists still practice and preserve the traditional style of songs (powwow, fiddle tunes, throat-singing, etc.) but also create and express new and innovative, urban and contemporary music in every genre such as country, folk, rock, heavy metal, punk, hip-hop, rap, electronic dance music, new age, jazz, classical, etc., in English, French, or Indigenous languages. One can still hear the distinct traditions of their cultural roots woven in their music infusing instruments of old and new while voicing important messages of oppression, social injustices, identity, pride, victories, love, relationships, sadness, hope and the joys and beauty of life. Indigenous artists are becoming more recognized on their own terms for their great contribution to the Canadian and international music industry and there is an awakening of Indigenous issues, life and people, including language revitalization that continues today. When we are open to learning and understanding of other cultures, we begin to understand the people.


Young trapper


Boy with hide drum


Legendary Métis fiddler, John Arcand


Andrea Menard, Métis singer-songwriter, actor, speaker


A Tribe Called Red

THE JUNO AWARDS: INDIGENOUS ARTIST OR GROUP OF THE YEAR


Jeremy Dutcher, 2019 JUNO Awards

Indigenous music and artists were first introduced to the Canadian music industry in 1994 when Elaine Bomberry, Ojibway and Cayuga from Six Nations, was a judge for the World Beat category of the JUNO Awards. Indigenous albums were also lumped into that category and Elaine realized that Indigenous music didn't fit in this category and artists were largely underrepresented and unknown. A conversation with Daisy Falle, president of CARAS (Canadian Academy of Arts and Sciences) at the time, set the wheels in motion for change when Daisy asked, "Why don't you start a category?" Elaine and her friend, Curtis Jonnie (also known as Shingoose) compiled a list of Indigenous artists to present to CARAS. Soon, the new addition was approved, and the Best Music of Aboriginal Canada category was introduced to the Juno Awards the following year in 1994.

In 2003, the Best Music of Aboriginal Canada category was changed to Aboriginal Recording of the Year. Aboriginal Recording of the Year became Aboriginal Album of the Year in 2010; and in 2017, the category was changed to Indigenous Music Album of the Year. In 2021, the category was retitled as Indigenous Artist or Group of the Year award to shine a spotlight on the accomplishments of Indigenous people. To be eligible, solo acts must be Inuit, First Nation, or Métis and at least 50% of all groups must be Inuit, First Nation, or Métis.

For a full list of Indigenous JUNO Award winners, please see the appendix at the end of the document.

In Memoriam

Curtis "Shingoose" Jonnie passed away on January 12, 2021. Curtis, who was from Roseau River Anishinabe First Nation, was a trailblazer who paved the way for Indigenous artists in the Canadian music scene while working with recognized Canadian musicians (e.g., Bruce Cockburn) and being inducted to the Manitoba Music Hall of Fame.

APPENDIX 1:
Glossary of Terms used throughout *Kanata*

Aesthetic experiences - aesthetics is a discipline concerned with the perception, appreciation, and production of art. Aesthetic experiences, such as looking at paintings, listening to music or reading poems, are linked to the perception of external objects, but not to any apparent functional use the objects might have.

A ja ja songs - Inuit drum dance songs often about personal experiences

Boujee - slang meaning luxurious in lifestyle yet humble in character

Colonization - the process of assuming control of someone else's territory and applying one's own systems of law, government, and religion

Cultural appropriation - also called cultural *mis*appropriation, is the adoption of an element or elements (fashion, iconography, trends, or styles) of one culture or identity by members of another culture or identity. This can be controversial when members of a dominant culture appropriate from disadvantaged minority cultures.

Culture - is the patterns of learned and shared behavior and beliefs of a particular social, ethnic, or age group. It can also be described as the complex whole of collective human beliefs with a structured stage of civilization that can be specific to a nation or time period. Humans in turn use culture to adapt and transform the world they live in. ("Culture" is a complex term. For more information: What is Culture? | Cultural Anthropology)

Elder - someone recognized by community members who has attained a high degree of understanding of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit history, traditional teachings, ceremonies, and healing practices

First Peoples - A term sometimes used in place of "Aboriginal peoples" or "Indigenous peoples", though less frequently. This term does not have any legal meaning.

Form - in music, form refers to the structure and organization of a musical composition or performance

Genre - a category of artistic compositions, as in music or literature, characterized by similarities in form, style, or subject matter

Iglu (igloo) - an Inuit house, being a dome-shaped hut usually built of blocks of hard snow

Katajjaq - also called Inuit throat-singing, is an ancient kind of vocal technique that produces intertwined trance-like, guttural sounds accomplished through circular breathing. It is traditionally performed by two Inuit women who sing duets (there are also solo throat-singers) in

a close face-to-face formation with no instrumental accompaniment in an entertaining contest to see who can outlast the other

Knowledge keepers (also called culture bearers) - are community-recognized individuals who have been gifted with their respective teachings by other Elders or Knowledge Keepers over years of mentorship and teaching

Mixed media - a term used to describe artworks composed from a combination of different media or materials

Stereotypes - any thought widely adopted about specific types of individuals or certain ways of behaving intended to represent the entire group of those individuals or behaviours as a whole. These thoughts or beliefs may or may not accurately reflect reality. Stereotyping people is a type of prejudice because what is on the outside is a small part of who a person is.

Sustainability - meeting our own needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs

Oral tradition - a community's cultural and historical traditions passed down by word of mouth or example from one generation to another without written instruction

Protocol - includes many things, but overall it refers to ways of interacting with Indigenous people in a manner that respects traditional ways of being. Protocols are not just "manners" or "rules," they are a representation of a culture's deeply held ethical system.

Two-spirit - refers to a person who identifies as having both a masculine and a feminine spirit, and is used by some Indigenous people to describe their sexual, gender and/or spiritual identity

Vocables - syllables that do not have referential meaning but hold deep spiritual meaning and value within a song. Vocables can consist of short phrases in a song or can encompass an entire song, which helps define patterns of repetition and variation in the music.

Worldview - a person's worldview is the way they see and understand the world, expressed through issues such as politics, philosophy, and religion

APPENDIX 2:
Excerpts from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission pertaining to Indigenous Languages

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-languages 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.

For further exploration into the *94 Calls to Action*, visit:

Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls to Action

APPENDIX 3:
The JUNO Awards

ARTISTS WHO WON INDIGENOUS ARTIST OR GROUP OF THE YEAR:

1994 **Wapistan** - Wapistan is Lawrence Martin
1995 **Susan Aglukark** - Arctic Rose
1996 **Jerry Alfred and the Medicine Beat** - ETSI Shon "Grandfather Song"
1997 **Buffy Sainte-Marie** - Up Where We Belong (revoked)
1998 **Mishi Donovan** - The Spirit Within
1999 **Robbie Robertson** - Contact from the Underworld of Redboy
2000 **Chester Knight, the Wind** - Falling Down
2001 **Florent Vollant** - Nipaiamianan
2002 **Eagle & Hawk** - On And On
2003 **Derek Miller** - Lovesick Blues
2004 **Susan Aglukark** - Big Feeling
2005 **Elisapie Isaac** - Taima
2006 **Burnt Project 1** - Hometown
2007 **Leila Gilday** - Sedzé
2008 **Derek Miller** - The Dirty Looks
2009 **Buffy Sainte-Marie** - Running for the Drum (revoked)
2010 **Digging Roots** - We Are
2011 **CerAmony** - CerAmony
2012 **Murray Porter** - Songs Lived and Life Played
2013 **Crystal Shawanda** - Just Like You
2014 **George Leach** - Surrender
2015 **Tanya Tagaq** - Animism
2016 **Buffy Sainte-Marie** - Power in the Blood (revoked)
2017 **Quantum Tangle** - Tiny Hands
2018 **Buffy Sainte-Marie** - Medicine Songs (revoked)
2019 **Jeremy Dutcher** - Wolastoqiyik Lintuwakonawa
2020 **Ceileigh Cardinal** - Stories from a Downtown Apartment
2021 To Be Announced...

INDIGENOUS ARTISTS WHO WON JUNO AWARDS IN OTHER CATEGORIES:

1989 **Robbie Robertson** - Album of the Year
1995 **Susan Aglukark** - Best New Solo Artist
1995 **Buffy Sainte-Marie** - Canadian Music Hall of Fame Inductee (revoked)
2010 **Tanya Tagaq** - Instrumental Album of the Year
2010 **A Tribe Called Red** - Breakthrough Group of the Year
2016 **Buffy Sainte-Marie** - Contemporary Roots Album of the Year (revoked)
2017 **William Prince** - Contemporary Roots Album of the Year
2017 **Buffy Sainte-Marie** - Humanitarian Award Recipient (revoked)
2018 **A Tribe Called Red** - Group of the Year