

# ART NOW

A PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN THE OTTAWA ABORIGINAL COALITION  
AND THE BOYS AND GIRLS CLUB, DON MCGAHAN CLUBHOUSE | 2019



## ABOUT THE PROJECT

ART NOW is a Boys and Girls Club program that provides cultural arts programming at the Don McGahan Clubhouse through a variety of art forms. In 2018, the Boys and Girls Club of Ottawa partnered with the Ottawa Aboriginal Coalition to enhance ART NOW with Indigenous-specific arts programming, allowing members of the Don McGahan Clubhouse the opportunity to enhance their understanding and appreciation of the arts through an Indigenous lens.

Through this partnership, the OAC was responsible for coordinating workshops with 5 Indigenous artists, performers or cultural teachers. The OAC sub-contracted Melissa Hammell (Pine Gum Studio) to execute the workplan. This report highlights the Indigenous arts activities that took place at the Clubhouse between January and June 2019.

## PROJECT COORDINATION

For each Workshop, a proposal was submitted that introduced the artist and the design of the workshop. Once negotiated and approved, the artist was booked for 1-6 sessions, depending on the type and length of workshop.

Melissa worked directly with each artist, purchasing and preparing workshop supplies, coordinating the logistics for each of their sessions and assisting onsite when necessary. For each workshop, contact information for artists was provided to the Club to help them to strengthen their networks to be able to engage Indigenous artists in future programming.

### ART NOW

Indigenous Arts Workshops @ Boys & Girls Club of Ottawa



## Monica Ethier

TRADITIONAL DANCER

#### WORKSHOP TOPICS

- Pow Wow 101
- Introduction to Hoop Dancing
- Hoop making and decorating

#### CONTACT INFO

613-863-4154  
monica.ethier@gmail.com  
Ottawa, ON



#### PROPOSAL

**Workshop #1: 1.5 hrs**  
*Hoop Making*

- Hoop Dancing Demo
- A group of children will work on taping and decorating 2 sets of 10 hoops
- Max: 20 students / Ages: all
- Space: workshop room with tables

**Workshop #2: 1.5 hrs**  
*Hoop Dancing*

- Introduction to different styles of Pow Wow dancing set to both traditional and contemporary music
- Introduction to basic Hoop Dancing footwork and shapes using hoops made in workshop #1
- Max: 20 students / Ages: all
- Space: Gym or field

#### COST

*Materials: approx \$190.00*

- 100 ft 3/4" PCV piping
- 2 x 3/4" hardwood moulding dowels
- 20 x 20ft 1/2" coloured electrical tape
- Facilitator will provide special glue and cutters

*Workshop Facilitation: \$150 x 2*

**Total: approx \$490.00 / \$24.50 per person**



ottawaaboriginalcoalition.ca

Melissa Hammell, Lead Consultant  
melissa@pinegumstudio.ca / 613.297.5300



## Workshop 1

**Artist:** Monica Ethier | **Sessions:** 3 | **Participants:** 30 | **Ages:** 6-12

**Workshop topics:** Pow Wow 101; Pow Wow dance demonstration; Hoop making and decorating; Introduction to Hoop Dancing

Monica designed a 3-week (6 hour) workshop that engaged 24 members of the Boys and Girls Club in learning about Pow Wow dancing, making a set of hoops for the Club to keep, and teaching students basic hoop moves that they performed at their Club-wide talent show and at the Pow Wow showcase in June.

The first session was a “Pow Wow 101” workshop where 15 members learned about First Nations culture, different types of Pow Wow dancing, music and regalia. Monica brought her jingle dress and her hoop dancing regalia to show the students. She also brought her hoops and demonstrated some hoop dancing moves. The children got to try some basic shapes with hoops and learned that they would each be making their own hoop at the

For the second session, Monica brought PCV piping and coloured hockey tape for a hands-on hoop making workshop. The session was at maximum capacity at 20 members and had a waitlist of children hoping to participate. Students were given a colouring sheet with a hoop on it and started by planning their colour blocking for their hoop. Once the hoops were assembled, the students worked together to share the coloured hockey tape to decorate their hoops.



In the third session, 30 students shared Monica's hoops as well as the new set of hoops to practice basic shapes. They worked with partners and in small groups to design a short routine and took turns performing for the whole group. One of the groups continued to practice together after school and performed their routine at the annual Boys and Girls Club talent show. Monica came back again in June for the Pow Wow showcase, running a small group workshop and helping to choreograph a hoop demonstration at the Pow Wow.





## Workshop 2

**Artists:** Dion and Samantha Metcalfe | **Sessions:** 6 | **Participants:** 120 | **Ages:** 6-16

**Workshop topics:** Inuit Culture; Inuit Games; Throat Singing

Dion Metcalfe is an urban Inuit storyteller and Inuit Games teacher. His daughter Samantha also leads Inuit cultural workshops, teaching games and demonstrating throat singing. Dion and Samantha took turns leading repeating workshops over a 6-week period and all of the members of the Club had a chance sign up for one or two of the sessions. In each session, Dion and Samantha talked about Inuit culture including the urban Inuit experience. They described Inuit sport in detail and asked volunteers to help them to demonstrate each game before breaking the group in to small groups / partners to practice the games. Each workshop was lively and highly interactive. Samantha returned in June with her brother Kyle, teaching Inuit games again and performing throat singing at the for the Pow Wow showcase.



## Workshop 3

**Artists:** Elberlyn Hill & Justin Holness | **Sessions:** 2 | **Participants:** 13 | **Ages:** 11-16

**Workshop topics:** self-love; self-esteem; Indigenous hip-hop; 7 Grandfather teachings

Elberlynn "LB" Gerritsen Hill is a 19-year-old hip hop artist and motivational speaker from Ottawa. She works with Justin Holness from Tribe Academy leading "Hoodie Workshops".

The workshop is designed for pre-teens / teens and focuses on self-love and self-esteem, grounded in Indigenous values of respect, love and courage. Over two sessions, a group of 13 youth designed, and spray painted their own hoodies. As the youth were designing their hoodies, LB held an open discussion about self-love and telling your truth through art / poetry / lyric writing. At the end of the two sessions, the youth each presented their hoodies and talked about what their designs meant to them.

The thirteen youth involved in the workshop were also part of an on-going hip-hop dance club at the after school program. At the annual Boys and Girls Club talent show, they performed a dance proudly wearing their spray-painted hoodies.



## Workshop 4

**Artists:** Nathaniel Parant | **Sessions:** 1 | **Participants:** 30 | **Ages:** 6-12

**Workshop topics:** 7 Grandfather teachings; medicine wheel; painting/colouring; button making

Nathaniel came in for one two-hour session, teaching the younger children about the medicine wheel and the Seven Grandfather Teachings through visual art. He designed colouring pages and button templates on the themes of Wisdom, Respect, Truth, Humility, Honesty, Courage and Love; as well as the corresponding animals: Beaver, Buffalo, Turtle, Wolf, Raven, Bear and Eagle. Using creative expression through art, participants were guided to share examples from their own lives of when they used embodied one of the teachings.

It is worth noting that a few of the youth in attendance at the Boys and Girls Club are urban Indigenous community members themselves and were so proud to have strong, positive role models coming in to teach everyone about their culture. At this art workshop, a small group of Indigenous children excitedly shared what they already knew about the Grandfather teachings, and one child even shared how to say a couple of the teachings and animal names in Algonquin!



## Workshop 5

**Artists:** Several | **Sessions:** 1 | **Participants:** 120 | **Ages:** 6-17

**Workshop topics:** Pow Wow Showcase; Inuit games; Cultural display; Hoop Dancing; Drumming and singing; Fancy dance; Jingle dance; Grass dance; Round dance;

The Pow Wow Showcase was a coming together of all of the Indigenous workshops that had been held in 2019, as well as a Pow Wow demonstration by First Nations dancers in full regalia.

From 3:30-5:00 p.m. there was a round robin of workshops set up throughout the centre. 120 youth were split into groups of 30 and each spent 20 minutes at each of the stations.

### Station 1: Cultural Show and Tell

Victoria Tenasco and Celine Debassige set up an interactive display of First Nations, Métis and Inuit cultural items including drums, shakers, animal furs, and a medicine table with tobacco, sage, sweetgrass and cedar. Participants were encouraged to take in a “5 senses tour” of Indigenous culture, picking up different items, and asking questions about them.

### Station 2: Inuit Games

Samantha and Kyle Metcalfe taught Inuit Games on mats in the large gym. Most of the youth had already attended the previous Inuit Games workshops, so the leaders were able to increase the level of skill and competition among participants. Samantha also demonstrated throat singing for each group.

### Station 3: Hoop Dancing

Monica returned with three sets of hoops to teach all of the youth basic shapes. The students who had attended her previous workshops were very proud to be helpers, showing their friends how to use the hoops. Monica worked with a few kids from each group to choreograph a short hoop dancing routine to be showcased as part of the Pow Wow demonstration.

### Station 4: Art table

Nathaniel returned with some free-form art activities using different mediums such as watercolour paints, pastels, markers and pencil crayons to create art based on the animals that he taught about in his previous workshop.



Snack: The Club purchased 10 loaves of baked bannock with blueberry sauce and 10 litres of strawberry drink from the Wabano Centre for Aboriginal Health to serve for snack during the round robin activities.

From 5:00 – 6:00 p.m. all members and staff joined in the Pow Wow showcase. The Ottawa River Singers opened the mini Pow Wow with an honour song and spoke about the drum and each of the songs they chose for the day. There were two jingle dress dancers, a fancy shawl dancer, a grass dancer, and a hoop dancer, who all spoke about their style of dance and their regalia before dancing to one or two songs each. The youth demonstrated hoop dancing with the Club's new set of hoops made by the children. The showcase ended with an intertribal and then a round dance with over 100 youth participating.



## CONCLUSION

The mission of the Boys and Girls Club is to provide a safe, supportive place where children and youth can experience new opportunities, overcome barriers, build positive relationships and develop confidence and skills for life. Through each of the five Indigenous workshops offered through ART NOW, the OAC supported this mission by introducing youth to a variety of Indigenous artists and art forms.

The continuation of such a program would benefit local Indigenous artists and performers, Indigenous organizations within the OAC, as well as all of the staff and students who attend the Boys and Girls Club.