



**11th Annual
New Sun Conference on Aboriginal Arts:**

**RECONFIGURED
REALITIES**

Saturday, March 3, 2012

9:00 am - 4:30 pm

Room 5050, 5th Floor

Minto Centre,

Carleton University





NEW SUN CONFERENCE ON ABORIGINAL ARTS

welcome

Welcome to Carleton University and the 11th Annual New Sun Conference on Aboriginal Arts: Reconfigured Realities. As in the past we acknowledge with gratitude the hospitality of the Algonquin people on whose unceded territory we gather today. This year's theme is "Reconfigured Realities." But reality is a relative term open to interpretation: Whose realities are we talking about? And why do they need to be reconfigured?

If you depend on mainstream media for an accurate reflection of contemporary Aboriginal realities your grasp of indigenous experience will be sadly incomplete. Grim and gritty imagery continues to flood the airwaves, with rancour and disillusionment played out in endless solemn sound bites. More often than not, the creative, uplifting, and hopeful stories of cultural vitality and revitalization are overlooked. This may explain in part why the New Sun Conference endures and is now entering its second decade. Inspiring stories of struggle and triumph that find expression in the arts and touch the heart have been the lifeblood of the New Sun Conference from the beginning. A demonstrable hunger for such stories remains strong. Your presence here today attests to that.

In recent years, Elder Jim Albert has reminded us in his opening remarks, with the scent of cedar and sweetgrass still in the air, that we will be in ceremony for the whole day. In this, he affirms a widespread indigenous belief that the quest for knowledge and wisdom is invariably a spiritual one. This morning, we embark on such a quest together as members of one community – the New Sun community. Our journey begins in a university classroom re-consecrated as a safe and sacred space of indigenous learning, where certain realities have already begun to be reconfigured.

Today, photo artist KC Adams will share with us her playfully subversive explorations of indigenous media stereotypes, complicating and reconfiguring our notions of Aboriginal identities along the way. Award-winning documentary film maker Christine Welsh will demonstrate how film can play a pivotal role in reclaiming the dignity and identities of Aboriginal women while honouring their accomplishments. Conductor and composer John Kim Bell will retrace his prodigious

musical career, as well as the founding of the annually televised National Aboriginal Achievement Awards, which have brought national recognition to countless individuals honoured for exemplary community service and excellence in the arts. Heroes and role models alike, they presage Skawennati's Mohawk time travelling superhero, Hunter, whose adventures in cyberspace both illuminate history and affirm a vibrant indigenous future. And finally, Stephen Leafloor and his hyper-energetic BluePrintForLife hip hop crew will testify to the healing powers of music and dance and the enduring cultural impulse to internalize and make meaningful, newly introduced art forms. Our journey concludes Sunday afternoon with screenings of the films, *Finding Dawn* and *Arctic Hip Hop*, followed by a question and answer session. It will be a ceremony like no other. Enjoy.

All my relations,

Allan J. Ryan

PROGRAM 2012

8:30 - 9:15

Registration, Coffee/juice/muffins

9:15 - 9:30

Welcome, **Allan J. Ryan**

New Sun Chair in Aboriginal Art and Culture

Opening prayer, Elder **Jim Albert**

Welcoming remarks, **Roseann O'Reilly Runte**,

President, Carleton University

9:30 - 10:20

KC Adams, multi-media visual artist and photographer

10:20 - 10:35

Nutrition Break



NEW SUN CONFERENCE ON ABORIGINAL ARTS

PROGRAM 2012

10:35 - 11:25

Christine Welsh, documentary film maker and educator

11:30 - 12:20

John Kim Bell, arts producer, composer, conductor

12:30 - 1:30 pm

Buffet luncheon of Native cuisine, Fenn Lounge, Residence Commons

Menu:

- Bannock bread with maple butter and clove-scented Cloud berry compote
- Roasted corn and bacon soup
- Pickled root vegetable salad
- Mixed salad with sweet and bitter greens and saskatoon berries
- Seven grain rice casserole with little neck clams
- Sweet roasted squash
- Smoked duck ragout with celery root, winter vegetables and wild mushrooms
- Spicy pumpkin seed-crusting salmon fillet
- Corn and maple pudding with edible bush berries

1:30 - 2:00

BlueprintForLife in performance, featuring **Buddha**, throat singer **Evie Mark** and **Bboy Creeasian**, with **Bgirl Jusik**, **Dirty D** and **Shatter Star**

2:20 - 3:10

Skawennati, new media artist

3:15 - 4:05

Stephen Leafloor, founder of **BluePrintForLife** – “social work through HipHop” – with **Creeasian** and **Evie Mark**

4:10 - 4:30

Concluding remarks, gift basket draw, closing prayer

A free screening of the films *Finding Dawn* and *Arctic Hip Hop* will take place in Carleton University's Bell Theatre on Sunday, March 4, 1-5pm.



KC Adams

KC Adams is a Winnipeg-based artist who works in a variety of media – sculpture, installation, drawing, painting, photography, ceramics, printmaking and kinetic art. She has had several solo exhibitions, most recently Legacy at the Parramatta Artists Studios, in Parramatta, Australia, and has been featured in numerous group exhibitions, including: Anthem: Perspectives on Home and Native Land at the Carleton University Art Gallery, Circuit City at My Winnipeg, at la maison rouge gallery in Paris, The Language of Intercession at the Oboro Gallery in Montreal, and Cyborg Hybrids at Photoquai: Biennale des images du monde in Paris. She has done residencies at the Banff Centre, the Confederation Art Centre in Charlottetown, the National Museum of the American Indian in New York and a Canada Council international residency in Parramatta, Australia. KC has received grants and awards from the Winnipeg Arts Council, Manitoba Arts Council and the Canada Council for the Arts. Twenty pieces from her Cyborg Hybrid series are in the permanent collection of the National Gallery of Canada. She has an extensive background in arts administration in Winnipeg, serving as Administrative Coordinator at Plug IN ICA (Institute of Contemporary Art), Board President at the artist-run centre, aceartinc, and Director of the Urban Shaman Gallery. She has also taught art to children at Art City, Learning Through the Arts, and the Manitoba Arts Council's Artist in the Schools program. KC is a graduate of Concordia University and holds a BFA in studio arts.





Christine Welsh

Christine Welsh is a producer, writer and film director known for her strong commitment to documenting the experience of Indigenous women in Canada. Her films include *Women in the Shadows*, a one-hour documentary about her search for her Métis grandmothers. The film won the Best Documentary award at the 1992 Vancouver International Film Festival and was nominated for a Gemini award for Best Documentary. *Keepers of the Fire*, a tribute to Aboriginal women's resistance, earned her the honour of being named co-recipient of the first Alanis Obomsawin Award for outstanding achievement in the Canadian Aboriginal film industry. Her most recent film is the feature-length NFB documentary *Finding Dawn* which profiles three of the estimated 500 Native women who have been murdered or gone missing in Canada over the past thirty years. Christine is currently an Associate Professor at the University of Victoria where she teaches courses in Indigenous Women's Studies and Indigenous Cinema.



John Kim Bell

John Kim Bell is a pianist, composer, conductor, music producer, arts administrator, and was the first person of aboriginal heritage to become a symphony conductor. Born in Kahnawake, he began conducting for the Broadway stage in New York at the age of eighteen. He has composed music for film and television and is the founder of the Canadian Native Arts Foundation, National Aboriginal Achievement Foundation and the National Aboriginal Achievement Awards. Over a period of twenty years, he built the foundation into Canada's largest Aboriginal charity. He is a recipient of the Order of Canada, holds six honorary doctorates and, amongst other honours, received a Lifetime Achievement Award from the Royal Conservatory of Music in 2007. His proposal to establish a loan guarantee program for First Nations was successful with Ontario announcing a \$250 million loan guarantee program in March 2009. Mr. Bell is currently taking an active role in the development of energy projects involving First Nations. He recently established the Enbridge School Plus Program which awards \$1 million to First Nations schools in Western Canada. Mr. Bell is President of Bell & Bernard Limited, a management consulting firm specializing in First Nations economic development and energy.



Skawennati

Skawennati is a Montreal-based artist and independent curator who holds a Bachelor of Fine Arts and a Graduate Diploma of Institutional Administration from Concordia University. Recipient of the 2011 Eiteljorg Contemporary Art Fellowship, she is recognized as a pioneering New Media artist. Her art, addressing history, the future, and change, has been widely exhibited across Canada, the United States and Australia. She created the Aboriginally-determined, on-line gallery and chat space, CyberPowWow in 1996, followed by *Imagining Indians in the 25th Century*, a web-based paper doll/time-travel journal which has been presented across North America, most notably in Artrain USA's three-year, coast-to-coast tour of the show *Native Views: Influences of Modern Culture*. Her current production, *TimeTraveller™*, is a multi-platform project featuring a machinima series. Its website, www.TimeTravellerTM.com, won imagineNative's 2009 Best New Media Award. Additional projects include *Artist for the Ethical Treatment of Humans*, a subvertising response to an exploitive PETA campaign, and *80 Minutes, 80 Movies, 80s Music*, an ongoing series of one-minute music videos. Skawennati is Co-Director of *Aboriginal Territories in Cyberspace*, a network of artists, academics and technologists investigating, creating and critiquing Aboriginal virtual environments. *AbTeC's Otsi:!*, a video game mod created with students from the Kahnawake Survival School, won imagineNative's 2010 Best New Media Award.

Photo: Alex Subrizi



Stephen Leafloor

Stephen Leafloor is the founder of BluePrintForLife, which utilizes HipHop as both a community development tool and a model for alternative education. He has over 27 years experience as a social worker in the areas of probation, wilderness programs, street work with youth at risk, residential group homes, child protection and community outreach. Stephen has been active in HipHop culture as a dancer since 1982 and in 1986 completed his Master of Social Work degree at Carleton University with a thesis on HipHop culture and its importance for educators and social workers. He is the founder of the Ottawa-based Canadian Floor Masters – Canada’s oldest professional Breakdancing/Bboy crew. BluePrintForLife offers dynamic, culturally appropriate programs designed for First Nations and Inuit youth that are founded on HipHop, rooted in traditional culture, and focussed on community needs. Exploring the positive elements of HipHop becomes a survival toolkit for youth while celebrating traditional culture and leadership. In 2010 BluePrintForLife was the first organization from North America ever to be selected as a top finalist in the Freedom to Create awards, the world’s most prestigious award for outreach through the arts.



Creeasian

Matthew Wood's Bboy name, Creeasian, is a blend that reflects his Cree and Vietnamese ancestry. He is a senior youth facilitator with BluePrintForLife and an accomplished dancer, DJ, and BeatBoxer (creating drum beats with his mouth). He has been working with youth for the past eleven years and strongly believes in empowerment through music and dance. In 2011 Creeasian won the Rockstar energy drink DJ battle, and the 2011 Redbull DJ battle in Edmonton.



Evie Mark

Evie Mark is from the small Inuit community of Ivujivik in northern Quebec. An accomplished throat singer and skilled translator, she often travels with the BluePrintForLife team helping to integrate traditional Inuit culture into their workshops. Evie is also active in film production and has worked in every facet of this medium from camera work and acting to editing and directing. Her film work focuses on the issues affecting all aspects of life in the north. One of her films was featured at the very first New Sun Conference in 2002.

The New Sun Conference On Aboriginal Arts: Backgrounder

Since its beginning in 2002, the New Sun Conference on Aboriginal Arts has brought together in a public forum individuals from various First Nations, Metis and Inuit communities, as well as from the non-Native community. Presenters have included those with expertise in photography, painting, sculpture, film making, acting, musical performance, curating, arts education, architecture, literature and the culinary arts. Themes such as “healing through the arts,” “transforming traditions,” “engaging authenticity”, and “inspiring resilience” have been explored in a collegial and communal atmosphere that encourages dialogue on important cultural and artistic issues. The conference honours, and seeks to raise public awareness of individuals whose work affirms contemporary Aboriginal experience and contributes to increased cross-cultural understanding. All conference presentations have been videotaped and archived on DVD in the Carleton University Library.

New Sun: Continuing the legacy of her father, who was given the honorary name of “Old Sun” in 1962 by the Blackfoot Nation in Alberta, Joy Maclaren was given the name “New Sun” in 1995 by elders from the Blackfoot, Mohawk and Ojibwa nations at a special naming ceremony at Carleton University, to recognize her commitment to promoting Aboriginal culture and education across Canada. Her distinctive blue shawl, with its New Sun design in gold and copper sequins, was presented to her at that time. In 2011 she was given an honorary doctorate by Carleton University and made a Member of the Order of Canada in recognition of her philanthropy and ongoing support of post-secondary education.

Allan J. Ryan was appointed as the New Sun Chair in Aboriginal Art and Culture in 2001. The first of its kind in Canada, the Chair is situated in the School of Canadian Studies at Carleton. It was made possible through the support of the New Sun Fund, administered by the Community Foundation of Ottawa.

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poster and program graffiti image

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