



# Agenda

DAY 1 | TUESDAY, MAY 26, 2026

9 a.m.	<b>Opening Ceremonies</b> Drum song by Walking Bear Prayer by Elder Lucy Kakegamic Opening Remarks by Deputy Grand Chief Anna Betty Achneepineskum Art Conest Showcase & Prize Distribution Emcee Brent Edwards KAMINISTIQUIA/MCGILLIVRAY	
9:45 a.m.	<b>Keynote</b> Dr. Candace Manitopyes KAMINISTIQUIA/MCGILLIVRAY	
10:45 a.m.	Health Break	
11 a.m.	<b>Keewaytinook Okimakanak Board of Education, Indigenous Education Language, Culture &amp; Land Based Program</b> Keewaytinook Okimakanak Board of Education (KOBÉ) KAMINISTIQUIA/MCGILLIVRAY	
12:30 p.m.	Lunch	
1:30 p.m.	<b>Breakout Session: Reconnecting Language and Land: Anishinaabemowin Learning for Academic Credit</b> Mary Laur KAMINISTIQUIA/MCGILLIVRAY	<b>Breakout Session: Supporting Indigenous Foodways in First Nation households in Northern Ontario</b> Quinn Meawasige AMETHYST
2:30 p.m.	Health Break	
2:45 p.m.	<b>Breakout Session: Using Land-based practices to teach Language, science, geography &amp; more</b> Anika Guthrie KAMINISTIQUIA/MCGILLIVRAY	<b>Breakout Session: Tipi: More Than A Shelter</b> Maggi Hill & Leon Strang AMETHYST

# DAY 2 | WEDNESDAY, MAY 27, 2026

<p><b>9 a.m.</b></p>	<p><b>Overview of Day 2</b>          Drum song by Walking Bear          Prayer by Elder Lucy Kakegamic          Opening Remarks by Deputy Grand Chief Anna Betty Achneepineskum          Art Conest Showcase &amp; Prize Distribution          Emcee Brent Edwards          KAMINISTIQUIA/MCGILLIVRAY</p>	
<p><b>9:30 a.m.</b></p>	<p><b>Keynote</b>          Dr. Paul Cormier          KAMINISTIQUIA/MCGILLIVRAY</p>	
<p><b>11 a.m.</b> Health Break</p>		
<p><b>11:15 p.m.</b></p>	<p><b>Breakout Session: Bringing Them Home: Wahkohtowin in Action Through Youth, Land, and Workforce Development</b>          Angela Fletcher, Darcie Piche, David Flood, Daniel Speckert, Santana Vanbuskirk          KAMINISTIQUIA/MCGILLIVRAY</p>	<p><b>Breakout Session: Natural Law - Innenew Pimatisiwin</b>          Michel Koostachin          AMETHYST</p>
<p><b>12:30 p.m.</b> Lunch</p>		
<p><b>1:30 p.m.</b></p>	<p><b>Breakout Session: The Joy of Hide Tanning</b>          Jean Marshall, Shelby Gagnon, Charlotte Marten          KAMINISTIQUIA/MCGILLIVRAY</p>	<p><b>Breakout Session: Land and Lake: K-8 Landbased Learning in Iskatewizaagegan, Anishinaabe-Aki</b>          Rayne Wapioke          AMETHYST</p>
<p><b>2:30 p.m.</b> Health Break</p>		
<p><b>2:45 p.m.</b></p>	<p><b>Shibastik</b>          KAMINISTIQUIA/MCGILLIVRAY &amp; AMETHYST</p>	

Welcome Letter



# Anna Betty Achneepineskum

**DEPUTY GRAND CHIEF**

On behalf of Nishnawbe Aski Nation (NAN), I would like to welcome you and thank you for joining us at our 2026 Land-Based Learning Gathering: “Akii-miigwewin – Celebrating the Teachings of the Land”. This two-day event gathers knowledge keepers, educators, and community leaders from across NAN territory to share and honour land-based knowledge and experiences.

For the Anishinaabeg, Omushkego Inninewwuk, and Anishininewuk peoples, the land is core to who we are. When we look at the land and all that is in it, we see living things – we see and feel a spiritual connection to our Creator from whom all things come. To us, land is life, and Mother Earth provides. It is from their deep-rooted connection and relationship to the land that our ancestors practiced their cultures, languages, and teachings, and taught their children from an early age to know who they were. Land-based learning is important today because it is an integral part of our survival as Anishinaabeg, Omushkego Inninewwuk, and Anishininewuk peoples on our lands.

As you gather together, we hope you create opportunities and renew connections to support new and existing land-based learning initiatives beyond the classroom. Land-based learning is fundamental to keeping our languages, cultural traditions and practices alive for future generations. As teachers and educators, may you be inspired to incorporate the gifts of the land into your classrooms and within all subject areas.

Most of all, we hope that this event will provide you with the time to listen, learn, and engage but to also share, inspire and celebrate the teachings of the land!

Miigwetch,

A handwritten signature in white ink, appearing to read 'A. B. Achneepineskum', written in a cursive style.

Deputy Grand Chief Anna Betty Achneepineskum,

Nishnawbe Aski Nation



Welcome Letter

# Sherry Britton

**DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION**

Greetings! On behalf of Nishnawbe Aski Nation (NAN), I would like to warmly welcome you to our 2026 Land-Based Learning Gathering.

Each year, this gathering continues to grow and inspire educators from across Ontario. Registration fills quickly year after year, reflecting the strong interest in land-based learning and the meaningful role it plays both inside and outside of the classroom, within community schools and provincial education systems alike.

This gathering was created to encourage educators to bring the gifts of the land into their teaching practices and learning environments across all subject areas. Over the next two days, I hope you leave feeling inspired, connected, and equipped with new ideas, teachings, and approaches that support student success and well-being.

Land-based education reminds us of the importance of balance, connection, and lifelong learning. These teachings nurture mental, physical, emotional, and spiritual wellness for learners of all ages — something we can all benefit from in our daily lives.

Thank you for being part of this special gathering. I hope your time here is filled with meaningful conversations, valuable learning opportunities, and moments of reflection and connection.

Have a wonderful time at the 2026 Land-Based Learning Gathering!

Sherry Britton

Director of Education



# Lucy Rose Kakegamic

## Elder Address

Lucy Rose Kakegamic is a member of Keewaywin First Nation and is a dedicated mother and grandmother to her family. She resides in Thunder Bay. Lucy has served her community and First Nation people in various capacities. She has been committed to working to support students coming out for high school at Dennis Franklin and Pelican Falls as a counsellor and Elder.

She worked to inspire her students through listening, offering guidance and support in making healthier choices in life, in education, and through connection to their cultural traditions. She is now retired but is still called to support in an Elder role for KOBE, NAN and OSHKI.

**Need Support? Elders and Wellness Support will be available for attendees seeking guidance and support**

## DAY 1 AGENDA DETAILS



**KEYNOTE SPEAKER**

# Dr. Candace Manitopyes

9:30 AM - 10:45 AM | KAMISTIQUIA/MCGILLIVRAY

## Presenter Biography:

Born and raised on her reservation in Moose Factory, Dr. Candace Manitopyes is a proud member of the Moose Cree First Nation. Grounded by the Land, Water, and People of her community, she carries a legacy of leadership and resilience. Her grandfather, a historical chief and descendant of a Treaty 9 signatory, inspires her work and dedication to honouring her roots and advocating for Indigenous sovereignty.

10:45 - 11 AM | HEALTH BREAK



# Anna Fern Kakegamic

**Keewatinook Okimakanak Board of Education, Indigenous Education Language, Culture & Land Based Program**

**11 AM - 12:30 PM | KAMISTIQUIA/MCGILLIVRAY**

Anna Fern Kakegamic is with Keewatinook Okimakanak Board of Education (KOBÉ) to supervise the Land-Based and Language programs for the First Nation students attending the KO communities schools or the High schools in urban areas KOBÉ under Students Services program.

Anna Fern has spent 29 years working in education for various First Nation communities. She has taught in grades Kindergarten to grade 10, worked as a vice principal and principal/Interim Education Director. She also worked for Nishnawbe Aski Nation in the Education department prior to coming to KOBÉ.

Anna Fern Kakegamic supports the learning of Indigenous knowledge and learning from First Nation community Elders, & knowledge keepers the "Way of Life" taught by our ancestors. She continues to practice as a hunter, trapper and gatherer with family in land-based activities and brought in Elders to share their stories. She's also an avid beader and artist in floral designed earrings, moccasins, purses, and other items, and her beadwork is keeping the practice going by sharing the knowledge and techniques passed down to her practice in beadwork.

## **Keewatinook Okimakanak Board of Education (KOBÉ)**

The KOBÉ Indigenous Education Program supports language, culture, and land-based learning for First Nation students while they attend school. The program creates opportunities for students to stay connected to traditional ways of life, engage directly with the land, and learn from community knowledge keepers, guides, and Elders. It is designed to strengthen identity, promote cultural pride, and support the holistic development of students.

More specifically, the KOBÉ Land-Based Program supports high school students attending sites in Dryden, Sioux Lookout, and Thunder Bay. Seasonal land-based activities take place at camps in Sioux Lookout and at the Graham Road KOBÉ site. Activities include hunting, ice fishing, snowmobiling, canoeing, swimming, and more. Evening activities are also held at the activity centre, where students gather to work on small projects, celebrate together, and prepare traditional meals.

### **Four Workstations:**

**Station 1:** Dream Catcher, Literacy & Land-Based Connection - Gagan Walia & Grace Bluecoat

**Station 2:** KiHS Land-Based Activity - Thomas Whately & Desta Buswa

**Station 3:** Moose Hide Work - Mac Orlando & Angus Miles

**Station 4:** Hunts Activity - George Kakekaspan, David Matthews & Derek Atlookan



BREAKOUT SESSION

## Mary Laur

### Reconnecting Language and Land: Anishinaabemowin Learning for Academic Credit

1:30 PM - 2:30 PM | KAMISTIQUIA/MCGILLIVRAY

#### Presenter Biography:

Mary Laur is a member of the Mishkeegogamang Ojibway Nation and a leader in Indigenous post-secondary education with over two decades of experience. As the Director of the Indigenous Sharing and Learning Centre at Laurentian University, Mary is dedicated to fostering student success by weaving Indigenous knowledge, language and worldviews into the academic experience.

#### Prsentation Overview:

Reconnecting Language and Land: Anishinaabemowin Learning for Academic Credit highlights how land-based education supports Anishinaabemowin revitalization through culturally grounded teaching methods, the use of the Anishinaabemowin Verb Classification System. The presentation will also highlight the journey toward land based language learning for academic credit and will explore ways to sustain land-based language programs within academic institutions.



BREAKOUT SESSION

## Quinn Meawasige

### Supporting Indigenous Foodways in First Nation Households in Northern Ontario

1:30 PM - 2:30 PM | AMETHYST

#### Presenter Biography:

Quinn Meawasige is Anishinaabe from Serpent River First Nation. He graduated from Algoma University with a Bachelor of Arts in Community Economic and Social Development and a Certificate in Anishinaabemowin from Shingwauk Kinooomaage Gamig. Quinn currently works as the Northeast Community Relations Lead for Gaagige Zaagibigaa, a First Nations Food Self-Determination initiative servicing First Nations Peoples in Northern Ontario. Quinn is a founding member of The Waterways Collective, an Anishinaabe paddling collective whose recent work involves, paddling to pictograph sites, contaminants testing and environmental monitoring initiative in his community's waterways, micro fish hatchery operations, and a Manoomin (wild rice) revitalization initiative in his community's homewaters.

As of February 2026, Quinn is also the proud new owner and operator of Micro-Hatcheries Inc. Quinn is an active harvester, fisherman, hunter, forager, language learn/advocate, and outdoor adventure seeker. He is always working to make land and water-based learning opportunities accessible for his family, community and peoples.

### **Presentation Overview:**

Gaagige Zaagibigaa is a grassroots, Indigenous-led organization committed to fostering self-determination for First Nations communities and families in Northern Ontario through transformative foodways initiatives. This presentation will cover GZ's Self-Determined Household Support Program, a financial incentive for FN households in Northern Ontario to support and strengthen their access to land-based and traditional foodways.

2:30 PM - 2:45 PM | HEALTH BREAK



## **Anika Guthrie, Emily Kerton, Tony Bouchard**

**Using Land-based practices to teach Language, science,  
geography & more**

2:45 PM - 4 PM | AMETHYST

### **Presenter Biographies:**

Anika is a member of the Anishinaabek Nation with family roots in Wiikwemkoong. She has been working centrally at Lakehead Public Schools to support Indigenous Education for the past 10 years. As an Anishinaabekwe educator who loves learning, she strives to embed Anishinaabe principles of teaching, learning and leading in all aspects of her work to advance Indigenous student and community well-being.

Tony is a proud member of Kiashke Zaaging Anishinaabek (Gull Bay First Nation). He was raised speaking Anishinaabemowin as his first Language and is passionate about sharing this gift with the next generation, especially his granddaughter. He practices traditional Anishinaabe land-based practices such as hunting, harvesting, trapping & snaring. He has been supporting Language classrooms at Lakehead Public Schools for the past 3 years.

Emily is the land-based learning lead for Lakehead Public Schools where she connects students and teachers to the natural world with culturally relevant programming and resources, community and curriculum connections.

## Presentation Overview:

In this interactive workshop, we will share how a Language educator, a land-based educator and a first-language speaker with knowledge of traditional land-based practices have been working together to center land-based practices as a teaching tool for Anishinaabemowin, science, geography & more. Through modelling, storytelling and laughter, Anika, Emily and Tony will outline the process of working with elementary Ojibwe classes & secondary students to provide access to immersive Anishinaabemowin spaces in an authentic, experiential setting. From learning vocabulary in the classroom to getting out on the land, this experience showed that land-based language work is a collaborative process that engages learners of all ages.



# Maggie Hill

**Tipi: More than a Shelter**

2:45 - 4 PM | AMETHYST

## Presenter Biography:

For the last three years I have been the Grade 8 teacher for a fly in First Nation Community in northern Ontario. This school year has seen me embark on a new adventure. With obtaining my Environmental Education Specialist from Queens last year, the Community has asked me to create and teach their Land Base program for Grades K5 to 8 based on their history, culture, tradition and language.

I am a Haudenosaunee (Upper Mohawk) who has lived and worked, and still lives ( 30 years) in Anishinaabe (Ojibwe/Cree) Territory. I enjoy a quiet life wrapped in my culture, tradition, and family life.

## Presentation Overview:

Tipi, a powerful symbol of Indigenous culture and teachings. Each pole in the Tipi represents a unique value or lesson, coming together to form a space of connection, respect and learning. Lakeland College Canada

The Tipi is the spirit and body of woman, because she represents the foundation of family and community. It is through her we learn the values that bring balance into our lives.



# Paul Cormier

## Aki Gakinoomaagewin – Teachings (Learning) from the Earth (Land): Reconsidering 'Land Learning'

9:30 AM - 11 AM | KAMISTIQUIA/MCGILLIVRAY

### Presenter Biography:

Paul Cormier is a member of Lake Helen First Nations / Red Rock Indian Band in Northern Ontario. He holds a PhD in Peace and Conflict Studies from the University of Manitoba, a MA in Conflict Analysis and Management from Royal Roads University, and a BEd in Elementary Education from McGill University. His research interests include Indigenous peace building, traditional Indigenous education systems, and considering research as a process for peace building in Indigenous contexts. He primarily publishes in the areas of Indigenous peacebuilding, Indigenous education/learning systems, and Indigenous research methodologies. Paul is an Associate Professor, and Chair, Keewatinase – Indigenous Education at Lakehead University in Thunder Bay Ontario Canada.

### Presentation Overview:

Eliminating violence in our approaches to education requires the privileging of Indigenous worldviews through Aki Gakinoomaagewin in Anishinaabeg traditions. Personal and professional examples will be provided of how I employ Aki Gakinoomaagewin to transform the education system in my role as Chair of Keewatinase - Indigenous teacher training programs at Lakehead University. The goal of this presentation is to help participants rethink, what is commonly known as 'land learning', through an Indigenous lens of peace and violence. By privileging Anishinaabeg ways of learning that embrace respect for Aki, we can transform the education system to improve outcomes for our students.

11 AM - 11:15 AM | HEALTH BREAK



# Wahkohtowin Development NAN Land-Based Learning Gathering Panel

**Bringing Them Home: Wahkohtowin in Action Through Youth, Land, and Workforce Development**

11:15 PM - 12:30 PM | KAMISTIQUIA/MCGILLIVRAY

## **Presentation Overview:**

Through the Guardian Program, workforce development initiatives, and youth skills training, this work centers Indigenous youth in pathways that reconnect them to land, culture, and purpost. Grounded on Treaty 9 territory, the programs emphasize land stewardship, cultural revitalization, and seasonal learning guided by the 13-moon calendar.

## **Angela Fletcher**

### **Presenter Biography:**

Angela Fletcher, from Chapleau Cree First Nation with roots in Missanabie Cree First Nation, is deeply grounded in northern landscapes and traditions that shaped her respect for connection, care, and resilience. With a nursing background, she built her career on compassion, advocacy, and support.

Guided by her values and lived experience, she now advances Wahkohtowin by fostering holistic well-being, strengthening community ties, and promoting shared responsibility through collaborative, community-centered leadership in her new role as Workforce Development Coordinator.

## **Darcie Piche**

### **Presenter Biography:**

Darcie Piche is the Guardian Program Coordinator with Wahkohtowin Development, a youth advocate, and a member of Chapleau Cree First Nation.

She supports Indigenous-led land stewardship by coordinating Guardian programs that connect community members, especially youth to the land through monitoring, cultural learning, and skills development. Her work blends traditional knowledge with environmental practices, while promoting Wahkohtowin principles of kinship, responsibility, and strong relationships.

She is dedicated to empowering youth voices, strengthening community, and advancing culturally grounded approaches to conservation and workforce development following the 13-moon calendar.





# David Flood

## Presenter Biography:

David is a seasoned professional in forestry, governance development, and Indigenous business advancement, with over 20 years of experience. He currently serves as the Executive Director at Wahkohtowin Development, a 100% First Nations-owned organization in the Northeast Superior Region. In this role, David focuses on forest sector business development and forest management services, ensuring Indigenous Peoples' full participation in the benefits derived from forestry and forest management planning.

In addition to his work with Wahkohtowin, David has been an Independent Consultant since 2016, specializing in governance development and project management. His work emphasizes sustainable forestry practices, aligning industry standards with the principles of Indigenous rights, including the implementation of Free, Prior, and Informed Consent (FPIC) and the integration of UNDRIP (United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples) into forest management frameworks.



# Daniel Speckert

## Presenter Biography:

Daniel Speckert is the Mino Iskode (Good Fire) Catalyst with Wahkohtowin Development. A settler of Swiss, Lebanese, Irish, and Scottish roots from the Treaty 13 area of Newmarket, Ontario, Daniel holds a diploma in Fish and Wildlife Conservation and an advanced diploma in Environmental Law.

Over the past 13 years, he has worked in wildland fire with Aviation, Forest Fire and Emergency Services, Parks Canada, Australia's wildfire sector, and alongside non-profit organizations involved in cultural and prescribed fire initiatives. He has also had the privilege of learning and working alongside Nations across Turtle Island as they continue building capacity in Indigenous fire stewardship and land-based fire practices.

Much of Daniel's experience is rooted in the wildfire space, with a strong passion for training, mentorship, Indigenous-led fire stewardship, fire ecology, and building more fire-resilient communities while supporting reconciliation through fire management practices. It is an honour and privilege for him to work with Wahkohtowin as they continue to rekindle their relationship with fire.



PANELIST

# Santana Vanbuskirk

## Presenter Biography:

Santana is a young Kwe from Brunswick House First Nation. She is taking on a full time Guardian intern role at Wahkohtowin. Santana successfully completed a previous Wahkohtowin guardian program in 2024. She dedicates her heart to the land, water, air of mother earth. Santana has a background in community lead climate change monitoring initiatives including water monitoring, biodiversity, community engagements, and the sharing of knowledge for the benefit of other first nations and for mother earth. Santana plans to bring passion, new ideas, heart led initiatives, advocacy for her people and other first nation members, and new perspectives in her role at Wahkohtowin.



BREAKOUT SESSION

# Michel Koostachin

## Natural Law - Inninew Pimatisiwin

### Presenter Biography:

Michel J. Koostachin is a proud Cree member of the Attawapiskat First Nation who studied Social Work both at college and university. He is a Traditional Knowledge helper in ceremony and a Mental Health and Addictions worker. His background in Trauma and Grief training helps to deliver to his clientele as a Mental Health contractor in the northwest region.

### Presentation Overview:

We will look at the reminders in front of us through our 'Spirit', 'Language' and 'Land' with the spirit of indent. We have been disturbed with the intergenerational impacts and the colonial setting. Our people are spiritual which connects with our land and the language is important to speak.

12:30 PM - 1:30 PM | LUNCH



**BREAKOUT SESSION**

# Jean Marshall

## The Joy of Hide Tanning

1:30 PM - 2:30 PM | KAMISTIQUIA/MCGILLIVRAY

### Presenter Biography:

Jean Marshall is of Ahnishnaabe/English descent, born and raised in Thunder Bay, Ontario. She is a band member of Kitchenuhmaykoosib Inninuwug, also known as Big Trout Lake, Treaty 9. She has been practicing professionally as a maker for the past 20 years. As a child, she was surrounded by beadwork. This lasting admiration grew into her present day practice, becoming a bead worker & moose hide tanner

Jean attended the Dene Nahjo Urban Hide Tanning Residency at the Banff Centre for Arts and Creativity in Fall of 2018. She was mentored by the Dene Nahjo Collective. She observed and learned from master hide tanners Lucy Ann Yakalela & the late Judy Lafferty. She now is dedicated to leading, organizing, and supporting hide tanning projects in Fort William First nation, Ontario. This June, they will celebrate their 7th Annual Hide Camp. Her life goal is to become a master hide tanner someday.

She is thrilled to be sharing about her experience working with moosehides. This work has been life changing for her and she feels strongly that it can be for you too!



**BREAKOUT SESSION**

# Shelby Gagnon

## The Joy of Hide Tanning

### Presenter Biography:

Shelby Gagnon is an Anishinaabe/Cree artist from Aroland First Nation, Ontario. She has lived in Thunder Bay for most of her life. She has been learning and revitalizing the practice of hide tanning in Northern Ontario. She has attended multiple hide camps including Dechinta Centre for Research and Learning. Shelby is currently working with the

Food Action Network as the Indigenous food sovereignty Coordinator in Thunder Bay, Ontario.

Through involvement with community-engaged organizations and projects involving food sovereignty and security, BIPOC youth advocacy, 2SLGBTQ+ collectives, she uses multi-disciplinary mediums to explore individual and collective healing by connecting and living in reciprocity with the Land. By working with youth, activists and other artists, she is dedicated to expanding her knowledge and contemporary take on traditional methods of art, food and healing practices with and for the community.

Shelby will be teaching us about the importance of using the moose brain in the process of softening a moosehide. She will also guide us through an interactive creative workshop. Come have fun with us!



# Charlotte Marten

## The Joy of Hide Tanning

### Presenter Biography:

Charlotte Marten is from Kitchenuhmaykoosib, also known as Big Trout Lake, Ontario. As a residential school survivor, she maintained her mother tongue. She proudly speaks the Oji-Cree dialect fluently. She is passionate in helping revitalize and reclaim Anishinaabemowin. It is important for her to share language teachings with new learners. She uses joy and laughter to convey stories and teachings. She enjoys meeting new people and sharing her language knowledge. She will be facilitating interactive language activities throughout this workshop.



# Rayne Wapioke

## Land and Lake: K-8 Landbased Learning in Iskatewizaagegan, Anishinaabe-Aki

1:30 PM - 2:30 PM | AMETHYST

### Presenter Biography:

Rayne Wapioke is an Anishinaabe-Inini, Moose Clan of Iskatewizaagegan, who grew up on Shoal Lake and the surrounding woods. Spending his youth hunting and fishing he loved and got to know the lake not only geographically, but also Spiritually. Rayne loved to show others his homelands which lead him to be a Hunting and Fishing guide for not only guests, but fellow community members. He continues this practice as Landbased Coordinator for David Kejick School

### Presentation Overview:

Explain how DKS always practised Landbased activities, but created a fulltime program for the K-8 students to ensure they all had access to the Land and Lake through daily excursions. Explain how we grew and expanded the program and learned from logistics, scheduling, and seasonal cycles. Showcase the infrastructure we've invested in, the traplines, trails, cabins, etc. The equipment we've utilized to ensure we can do these activities safely (Ice fishing tents, propane warmers, heated Side-by-Side Cabs). Finish presentation with discussion about collaboration efforts and educational resource sharing

2:30 PM - 2:45 PM | HEALTH BREAK



# Shibastik

## Land Bass Healing

2:45 PM - 4 PM | KAMINISTIQUIA/MCGILLIVRAY  
& AMETHYST

### Presenter Biography:

Live music, original artwork and teachings shared through personal stories from life on the land as a Cree hunter on the Moose River and the James Bay Lowlands. This presentation aims to share knowledge about how healing being on the land is with those who may not have had the opportunities to have these experiences growing up.

### Presentation Overview:

Through lyrics, artwork and stories, participants are brought on a journey through the Mushkegowuk swamps, rivers and flats where I have had incredible adventures and life changing experiences. I have learned first hand the value of hard work, patience, and respect for all things. I have also learned how powerful our time on the land is when it comes to healing. We are our land. It is in us always. To connect with the land is to connect with your spirit. There is a silence that can only be found miles away from cities and towns, a silence that helps you hear the Great Spirit loud and clear. Without my upbringing as a Cree hunter, I would feel very lost in this modern world. The land has always and will always be there for us to help us find strength, balance and healing. As well, I will provide fundamental teachings for living on the land, helping participants feel more confident and encouraged to get out and practice the seasonal hunts and harvests.

# Youth Art Contest



## 1<sup>st</sup> Place Winner

**Silas Shortt, Age 11**  
**Apitipi Anicinapek First Nation**

*"Learning culture and land brings understanding and healing to the community by know, knowing and living by our seven grandfather teachings. I put seven rocks around the fire while people sit around it and share their teachings and life. They are all on the land together, living a healthy and happy life."*

# 2<sup>nd</sup> Place Winner

**Harmony Fisher, Age 17**  
**Longlake #58**



*"My painting reflects a time when I was admitted to the hospital for mental health reasons. I had to leave my home community, surrounded by bush, and travel into the city. It felt dark and heavy, being away from the land that usually brings me comfort. In my community, I turn to nature when I am struggling it helps me feel grounded and at peace.*

*In the hospital, everything felt cold and unfamiliar, surrounded by concrete and buildings.*

*When I opened the curtains in my hospital room, I realized that my window faced a small landscaped area instead of the parking lot and buildings. In that moment, I felt like the land had followed me. Seeing the plants, water and wildlife gave me comfort. That little bit of nature reminded me of home.*

*That connection brought me hope and a sense of healing. It showed me that even when we are far from our communities, our relationship with the land and our culture can still hold us, guide us, and help us find our way back to ourselves.."*

# 3<sup>rd</sup> Place Winner

**Silas Shortt, Age 11**  
**Apitipi Anicinapek First Nation**

*"When I see geese flying in the sky, I know winter is almost over. It makes me feel like something is changing. The cold, quiet days start to feel a little lighter, and I know spring and summer are coming soon.*

*In my culture, the land teaches us things. The geese aren't just birds. They show us about strength and finding our way. No matter how far they travel, they always come back. That reminds me that I can keep going too, even when things feel hard.*

*The gloominess of winter can feel heavy sometimes, but when the geese return, it feels like the land is waking up again. The snow melts, the sun stays out longer, and everything feels more alive. It makes me feel hopeful.*

*My painting of the goose shows that feeling. It's about healing, change, and remembering that hard times don't last forever. Just like the geese, we keep moving forward, and brighter days always come back."*





