

Lumsden Beach Camp 2021 Artist in Communities Project

Thanks to **Saskatchewan Arts Board Artist in Communities** grant, the Lumsden Beach Camp had five guest artists share their practices with campers and staff throughout the summer.

Together professional artists, campers, and staff explored how the arts can supplement and reinforce the benefits of land-based learning and outdoor education. Artists engaged the community in activities that were ecological, drew on Indigenous land-based knowledge, and instilled respect for the natural world. Projects built awareness around Saskatchewan native species, impacts of climate change, and the history of the land. The project was mutually beneficial, providing campers and staff with new skills while deepening the creative practices of the artists involved.

Canada's colonial history, the ownership of land, and the genocide of Turtle Island's First Peoples are intricately woven together. In this vein, Lumsden Beach Camp takes great care to acknowledge the truths of this history. This summer, age-appropriate education around the history of residential schools was integrated into the camp's Spiritual Care Time. Reflecting on this history was the first step and from there artists engaged campers in creative, ecological, and cultural practices that taught responsibility and interconnectedness - nurturing an awareness of Indigenous worldviews and a naturalist curiosity.

As a way of extending this learning to the broader camp community and into future camp experiences, lead artist **Shaunna Dunn** has put together this resource that maps the summer's creative activities. Additionally, she worked with the Last Mountain Lake Cultural Centre to support an exhibition highlighting the practices, learning, and artworks created by campers. The exhibition will run October 21 - November 9, with an **opening reception where a** dance performance by guest artist **Misty Wensel** was shared.

As part of the exhibition, there were public workshops by project artists **Joely BigEagle-Kequahtoway** and **Melanie Monique Rose** that were presented as part of Culture Days 2021.

Sessions #1 and #2 - Primary (Gr K-3) and Ecology Camp (Gr 4-7)

Joely BigEagle-Kequahtoway shared Indigenous knowledge and practices with campers during the first two weeks of camp. Campers were taught the significance of smudging and listened to storytelling about the history of the land, the impacts of colonization, and the importance of ceremony and cultural retention. Campers spent time listening to stories in the teepee that had been erected earlier in the summer by camp leaders and community partners from Scott Collegiate. Primary campers took time to daydream, learned the practice of making a tobacco offering when gathering from the land, and build miniature sculptures from natural materials that reflected what they'd learned from Joely's storytelling.



Joely taught the campers these words in Nakoda:

Unci Maka	grandmother earth
Pinawmiya	thank you
Mni Wiconi	water is life

At the end of the camp week, artist Shaunna Dunn led the children in creative activities that allowed them to reflect on the teachings they'd been offered through their time with Joely.



During the Ecology Camp, youth learned the practice of tobacco offering, gathered stones from the shores of the beach, and carried them to the top of a lookout where they built a buffalo effigy. This commemorative marker was built to reflect on the history of the buffalo and near extermination during colonization. The effigy acts as both a reminder to future campers, and a request to future generations to bring back the buffalo, and cultural teachings that were silenced for so many years.

Shaunna Dunn spent time with campers learning the process of making anthotypes.

Anthotypes are a printmaking process that uses photosensitive extracts from plants. Campers gathered saskatoon berries, blended them up, and then let them rest overnight to extract their juices. We also created a photosensitive emulsion using 1 part turmeric powder to 4 parts isopropyl alcohol. Emulsions and extracts were then painted onto watercolour paper to create photosensitive paper.

After reviewing mindful practices of gathering, we collected plants found on Lumsden Beach Camp land and created prints by laying our plants on the photosensitive paper and leaving them out in the sun for a few hours. A borax-water solution was used to strengthen the contrast on our turmeric prints after they'd developed. We then spent time identifying the plants we'd collected using plant guides and creating small booklets that highlighted their attributes.

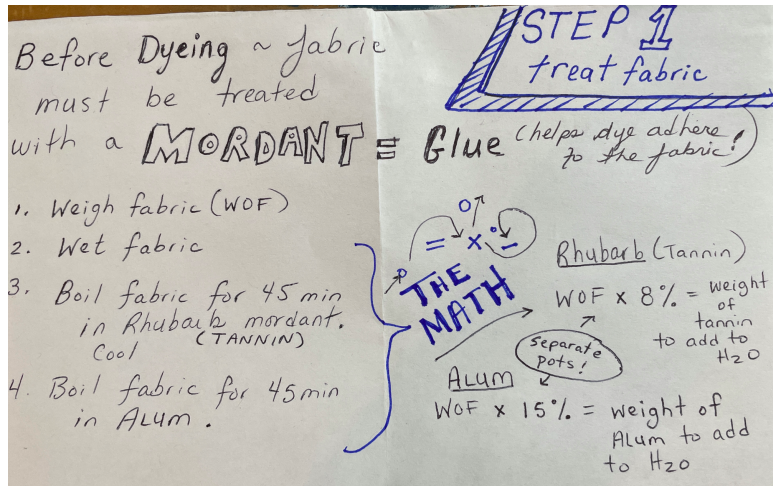


More information on the anthotype process can be found [here](#) and [here](#).

Sessions #3 and #4 - Intermediate (Gr 5-8) and JIB (Gr 2-5)

Melanie Monique Rose led intermediate campers in a 2-day natural dyeing and printing process. Melanie talked about the ecological impact of the fashion industry and sustainable trends like upcycling and eco-dyeing.

We began by preparing cloth for dyeing through treatment with a mordant. She discussed different mordants needed to treat fabric made from plants (cellulose fibres) and those that come from animals (protein fibres).



The campers used cotton, which was pretreated with both an alum and a tannin. Rhubarb leaves were used for our tannin. While the fabric was being treated, campers used plant guide books and mindfully collected materials from nature for their dyeing project. This included plants, flowers, charcoal, rocks, and sticks. Camp leaders tracked details of the process in 'zines'.

Next, campers covered their fabric with gathered items alongside some special materials Melanie brought (like cochineal - a bug that creates shades of red). The fabric was bundled or rolled and tied around sticks, then boiled overnight to infuse the fabric with the plant pigments.



Natural Dyeing Resources:

For this project, fabric and other dyes were purchased from [MAIWA](#). This site contains resources and supplies.

Melanie Monique Rose PDF on the process of dyeing from nature (part of the Common Weal Community Arts *Artful Isolation Series*) [HERE](#).

Natural Dyeing video series created for elementary school children [HERE](#).

Melanie led the JIB campers in a needle felting process, using the landscape as the subject for their artworks. Melanie shared about her own artistic practice that reflects on her Métis and Ukrainian heritage, using designs and cultural references as the inspiration for her current body of work, [The Flower People](#).

Using second-hand wool blankets as their canvas and locally sourced dyed wool, the students learned how to layer and integrate wool to create 2-dimensional artworks through a very 3-dimensional process. This project was one that campers were really excited by and everyone was very engaged in the process and proud of their final products.



Supplies for this project can be found at The Naked Sheep in Regina. Read more about the process in this workshop guide Melanie created with SaskCulture [here](#).

Session #5 - Movement and Play (Gr K-4)

Misty Wensel shared contemporary and creative dance with the campers using the land as inspiration for movement.



Misty said, “My work with the kids at LBC was inspired by the living plants and wildlife that resides in the valley and prairie where Lumsden Beach Camp is situated. Collaboratively we generated a list of wildlife that the dancers knew to live at camp or nearby, these creatures then inspired our movement. Through improv, we explored new ideas and then narrowed in on a few of our favourite movement ideas to create dance phrasing. Each group I worked with was inspired and extremely alive in their bodies and hearts as they dove into this exploration through the kinesthetic.”

Session #6 - Junior (Gr 1-4)

Shaunna revisited the needle felting techniques shared by Melanie Monique Rose (see session #4 for links on the process). Campers created needle felted camp badges inspired by the LBC experience and environment.



Session #7 - Explore Art (Gr 3-6)

Shaunna Dunn led Explore Art campers in an investigatory process of making paints from plants and natural pigments. Campers learned about how watercolour paints can be made through two separate processes. They gathered berries, flowers, leaves, rocks, and charcoal from the LBC lands. Some materials were blended, ground, boiled and soaked. Pigments from plants were extracted overnight and campers experimented with how pH can alter the colour of pigments using baking soda and lemon juice.



Ground charcoal and rocks were 'mulled' into suspension of a medium made up of gum arabic, water, and honey (from LBC bees!). Thanks to tips and gum arabic from [Black Dog Art Supply](#), campers learned how to create art with local materials. During this project, we talked about the ecological footprint of the items we buy from stores and also got a sense for the labour and time involved in producing your own art supplies.

Once all our paints were done, campers and camp leaders tested them out by creating miniature watercolour landscapes, fantastical scenes, and abstract explorations.

Making Paints from Natural Pigments Resources:

Easy natural paints from berries and flowers:

<https://artful-kids.com/2010/09/08/experimenting-with-natural-paints/>

Pigments from rocks: <https://www.lostincolours.com/foraging-for-pigments-from-local-rocks/>

Video on process for making watercolours through mulling pigment, gum arabic, honey, and clove oil: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L_F-ZmUnMAI&t=136s

Instructions on making watercolour paints:

<https://www.artistsandillustrators.co.uk/how-to/watercolour/690/how-to-make-your-own-watercolour-paint>

Mooky Cornish spent an afternoon with Explore Art campers and introduced them to character development through physicality and intention. Campers performed around the campfire as they channeled moods, dispositions, energies, and attitudes. Mooky closed the day by improvising an ode to Lumsden Beach Camp accompanied by her accordion.

