

MEDIA CONTACT

Dominique Jacobs

Communications & Resource Development Coordinator

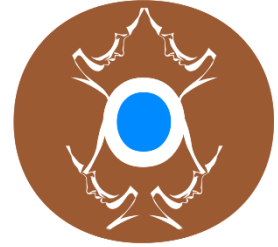
Support Network for Indigenous Women and Women of Color

203-2722 Fifth Street

Victoria BC V8T 4B2

domi@sniwwoc.ca

250-277-2545



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The Support Network of Indigenous Women and Women of Colour (SNIWWOC) presents a new Art Exhibit which highlights the importance of Indigenous representation in the Arts.

The exhibit features 10 Indigenous artists who completed a six-week mentorship through the SNIWWOC Indigenous Youth arts program and are showcasing their final works at an online art show which can be found [here](#).

Victoria, B.C., Canada. November 3, 2020: The Support Network for Indigenous Women and Women of Colour (SNIWWOC) is presenting an art exhibit called *#representationmatters* at the Esquimalt Community Arts Hub. The theme of the exhibit is “*representation matters*,” which is both a commonly-used hashtag on social media and a larger social movement to create greater inclusion and diversity in media. Each week artists were mentored by established and well-known Indigenous art practitioners throughout the program.

During a virtual Town Hall event, Mentor Jesse Campbell shared his perspective on why movements like *#representationmatters* are important: “For a long time Indigenous people have been suppressed and shamed for being visible in the public realm. It’s important to provide Indigenous artists and youth with more opportunities to feel proud of their ancestry. We need to reclaim space and show one another that we have a lot to share,” says Campbell.

Campbell is of Métis, Cree, Scottish, and English ancestry currently living on the traditional Lekwungen territories. He is a mural painter and has helped produce many public art pieces throughout Greater Victoria and is now leading his own projects throughout the city.

Central to the theme of increasing Indigenous representation in the arts, is the idea of galleries and museums as “Gatekeepers” to what is publicly displayed or deemed of importance. Artist and participant Teresa Vander Meer-Chassé focuses her work around what types of art can be represented in galleries: “Process is a huge part of my art and something that we don’t pay a lot of attention to. So, what I created is zigzagging porcupine quills. It’s a very old traditional style of using quills and applying them in the zigzag formation. My piece shows how I learned to zigzag from the very beginning up until I felt more comfortable and added things in.”

#representationmatters will showcase not only the artistic work of the participants, but also create opportunities for community, connection and discussion around what it means to be an Indigenous person in Canada.

When the participants were asked to describe their first experience with Indigenous art that changed their life, Rowan Hynds shared their experience hearing the musical work of Ansley Simpson, an Anishinaabe speaker, label rep, and singer-songwriter: “Hearing not just Indigenous music, but an Anishinaabe person who was both making contemporary music and bringing their culture into it was really kind of ground-breaking for me.”

Hynds is a multi-disciplinary artist whose work explores the complicated nature of identity. They believe that the relationship between artist and audience is one of mutual vulnerability, and as a result has an incredible capacity to foster community and encourage solidarity.

The exhibit will be on display at the Esquimalt Community Arts Hub starting Thursday, November 12th and will run until Saturday, November 21st. **The gallery is free and open to the public Wednesday through Saturday from 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. The art is for sale and can also be viewed [online](#). All proceeds go directly to the artists. Please support our local, youth Indigenous artists.**

ONLINE gallery website:

<https://www.sniwwoc.ca/representation-matters-exhibition>

Meet the Artists:

<https://www.sniwwoc.ca/blog/2020/representationmattersfinalartistselection>

SNIWWOC's mission is to support and help Black, Indigenous women, women of colour, youth and children take greater control of their lives, providing culturally appropriate services in different languages. All of the programming is developed and delivered by women. SNIWWOC offers: One-on-one free therapy, career planning, virtual workshops, seminars, wellness classes, peer support and much more.

Info: [sniwwoc.ca](https://www.sniwwoc.ca)