

THE INDIGENOUS PERFORMANCE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE

pilot program : final report  
march 2017

CAPACOA \* Indigenous Performing Arts Alliance \* Ontario Presents

**Ontario  
Trillium  
Foundation**



**Fondation  
Trillium  
de l'Ontario**

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## introduction

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The Indigenous Performance Professional Development Initiative (IPPDI) is a response to an identified need to develop pathways to successful relationship building between Indigenous artists and communities, and the community based performing arts presenters.

The IPPDI will increase opportunities for Indigenous artists to create, produce and perform by providing a means to productive engagement with the existing presenting ecosystem. It will explore how best to reconcile disparate paradigms and cultural values.

Supported by concurrent international research and similar undertakings in Australia and worldwide, this initiative will focus on mutual respect and bi-lateral knowledge transfer, raising appreciation and awareness between the Indigenous performing arts sector, and community based Ontario presenters. After our initial research and test year in 2016-17, and a subsequent three-year project in Ontario, we will have a template for a national approach across Canada.

Supporting tools, including protocol documents, sensitivity training circles, community consultations, Indigenous cultural connectors and facilitators will be developed to advance understanding of local cultural practice and integrate traditional knowledge and customs with current presenting practice.

This initiative will trigger change in mainstream organizations: knowledge, resources and tools will be offered to all levels of the presenters' operation. IPPDI will encourage transformation on all levels from box office to backstage, through to governance and practice.

This initiative will develop a knowledge infrastructure delineated by relationships built on trust and mutual respect. It will acknowledge regional specificities, while providing an overarching framework for growth.

Our pilot year 2016-17 was particularly important for developing new relationships founded on trust, cooperation, collaborative activities, and the evolution of a framework that allowed space and time for all voices to be heard. Our primary activities were

- the development of an operational framework
- the development of an advisory pilot group
- the appointment of an Indigenous Facilitator
- advisory retreats and meetings
- relationship building
- visioning
- the articulation of draft custom partnership plans for the communities.

## inception

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CAPACOA hosted a Regional Presenters retreat and a National Network meeting at the beginning of May 2015. In attendance, at both the retreat and the meeting, was Cole Alvis (Metis-Irish) from the Indigenous Performing Arts Alliance (IPAA). Cole spoke eloquently about the needs of the Indigenous performing arts sector, including the importance of honouring Indigenous protocols. There was a great deal of discussion around the lack of knowledge and understanding surrounding the presentation of Indigenous performing arts. At the Talking Stick Industry Series Vancouver 2015, the community mobilized around the formation of an Indigenous Performance Network. IPAA, Ontario Presents and CAPACOA have decided to partner in a regional professional development initiative which will establish relationships focussing on mutual respect and increased knowledge, appreciation and awareness between the Indigenous performing arts sector, and community presenters across Ontario.

Lack of touring opportunities for Indigenous artists is an issue in Canada. Indigenous artists have a lack of access to the mainstream presenting network. Many Indigenous artists are not tour-ready, and do not have similar opportunities for management, tour managers, industry support, resources for marketing/promotional materials and more due to historic inequalities or access. Presenters generally have low levels of awareness around established Indigenous artists and works - not only emerging artists. They also have low levels of understanding of how to present Indigenous work, or even how to access it.

Phase I of this initiative was a research and development stage, April 1, 2016 through March 31, 2017 to identify and engage Pilot participants, research best models, geographic regions and partnerships.

Phase II, a three year, regional program based in Ontario, will be launched April 2017 through March 2020. It will identify best practice and potentially develop a model for a pan-Canadian effort in subsequent years. Learning happens over time, sustained learning is the key – this is a first step.

## goals and objectives

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The Indigenous Performance Protocol Professional Development Initiative is about:

- Creating opportunities to put more Indigenous cultural material in mainstream venues
- Creating opportunities for Indigenous curators and practitioners to program within the mainstream presenting community
- Creating a welcoming culture within the presenting community towards Indigenous artists and First Nations audiences
- Setting a framework for an exchange of best practices between mainstream presenters and cultural connectors in Indigenous communities
- Making our mainstream presenting venues safe and respectful performances spaces.
- Developing meaningful relationships and an exchange of knowledge between arts presenters, Indigenous performing artists and First Nations communities.
- Curatorial development: enabling arts presenters to take part in professional development program that will expand their knowledge and understanding of Indigenous performing arts in Ontario and break down any perceived barriers.
- Organizational change: providing opportunities for mainstream presenting organizations to have the full breadth of their staff involved in information exchange
- Defining a pathway for arts presenters to undertake artistic risks and engage their audiences in new experiences
- Provide an enhanced appreciation for Indigenous performing arts for regional audiences.
- Developing new partnerships/collaborations with the Indigenous performing arts community and supporting cultural inclusivity.
- Seeking to increase the appreciation of Indigenous performing arts for audiences in Ontario.
- Developing an audience within the Indigenous community

## project architecture

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This architecture outlines our projections for the upcoming regional project across Ontario, 2017-20.

The Indigenous Professional Development initiative takes the form of a collaboration between CAPACOA, IPAA, Ontario Presents, and Indigenous performing arts organizations. Following the research year in 2016-17, a subsequent regional project will take place throughout Ontario, 2017-2020, in targeted communities identified through our initial research (see Key Elements).

### Facilitation and Consultation

In line with Indigenous cultural perspectives on integrative relationships and consensus building, facilitators drawn from Indigenous communities across Ontario will be identified and engaged to consult at all levels of the three year, pan-Ontario initiative. Every element, from which regions should be targeted, to what content is to be developed, will arise from this bi-lateral consultative process, attended by leaders of CAPACOA, IPAA and Ontario Presents. The first year of Phase II's three-year scope will be consultative, to prepare a common space for learning about traditional value systems. Our approach will be thoughtful and open, with the expectation that content for the practical elements of the initiative will be revealed through a shared, immersive experience.

### Location

The sessions will be hosted by Indigenous performing arts organizations across Ontario, particularly in Indigenous communities. Presenters will have the opportunity to meet with artists and communities developing Indigenous performance. Locating the sessions in the communities will enhance and deepen the experience, and develop relationships between the presenters and the arts practitioners.

### Participants

Indigenous performing arts organizations, Indigenous communities and presenters/producers from across Ontario will be invited to participate in the initiative. Based on consultation undertaken over the first year, twelve distinct regions within Ontario will be chosen for full participation in the three-year regional initiative. All local presenters and stakeholders in the presenting community will be invited to participate. Ontario Presents will be key in this process, and leaders will emerge as presenters and facilities share their resources to support these common goals. Indigenous producers, artists, facilitators and community members will identify all Indigenous stakeholders in the region for inclusion. On the presenter side, all venue staff will have access to this development, which will not be targeted solely at EDs or specific areas in the existing hierarchy.

CAPACOA and the Regional Presenting Networks including Ontario Presents have in the past collaborated on significant projects such as *Presenters' Toolkit*, *National Compensation Survey*, and *Value of Presenting Study* and have proven success in providing leadership on emerging issues.

## **pilot year : interim results capture**

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OTF SEED monies were provided to support our initial year of research and development activities. Our original work plan for 2016 – 2017 research year included the following goals and objectives:

1. Development of evidence base and rationale, introduction of new collaborative postures, research of the leading issues involved in the initiative
2. Introduction of the facilitation and consultation stage, activation of the stakeholders' resources
3. Development of the overarching strategy and supporting documents
4. Target and hire of an Indigenous Facilitator for a series of Community Consultations
5. Consultative Travel Throughout Ontario, development of Community Consultations strategy (Cole Alvis (IPAA); Judy Harquail (OP); Indigenous Independent Producer Denise Bolduc
6. Development of a Workshop strategy
7. Development of a strategy for Sensitivity Training Circles as in house training for presenters
8. Research travel and attendance at the Yukon Intertribal Gathering, fall 2016
9. Develop an evidence base for our approach
10. Identify and establish an evaluation and reporting protocol

Over April to October 2016, the principal organizations undertook a series of weekly dialogues and meetings to further explore a shared strategic framework around:

- Developing an evidence base, and seeking best practice models
- Target and hire of an Indigenous Advisor and Facilitator to co-manage the three year roll out, and co-develop the regional PD and workshop strategy
- Target and establishment of regional advisor pairs, originating in both the Indigenous and non-Indigenous arts community
- Developing a reporting protocol

The other activities for the pilot year are:

- Evidence and best practice research
- Consultative travel, including CAPACOA and OP as invited guests at the Yukon Intertribal Gathering to meet, engage, view work and listen
- Retreat I: Buckhorn/Curve Lake
- Retreat II: Brantford/Six Nations
- Retreat III: Buckhorn/Curve Lake
- Final report on research, tool development, models, relationship building and retreats

### **evidence and best practice research**

There has been continual research, exploration and exchange of best models between Indigenous and Non Indigenous partnerships, and between national and international engagers. This includes attendance at events and performance markets, document sharing and ongoing communication and relationship development.

## **pilot year : information capture on advisor meetings**

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Three advisor meetings in total were convened:

- Retreat I: Buckhorn/Curve Lake – October 2016
- Retreat II: Brantford/Six Nations – November 2017
- Retreat III: Buckhorn/Curve Lake – February 2017

An inclusive selection process with input from all Principal partners, Indigenous cultural consultants and regional participants resulted in the target and establishment of Community Advisor Pairs, originating in both the Indigenous and non-Indigenous arts community. These pairs consist of one mainstream presenter representative, and one Indigenous arts and cultural organization representative. They are:

Brantford, Ontario

Janis Monture, Executive Director, The Woodland Cultural Centre  
Glenn Brown, Theatre Manager, The Sanderson Centre

Peterborough, Ontario

Patti Shaughnessy, Producer/Artistic Director, O’Kadenigan Wiingashk  
Ray Marshall, General Manager, Showplace Performance Centre

St. Catharines, Ontario

Jessica Carmichael, Artistic Director, Carousel Players  
Annie Wilson, Programming Supervisor, First Ontario Performing Arts Centre

The **first Advisor meeting** was convened October 24 – 26, 2016 at Buckhorn/Curve Lake. The evening of the 24<sup>th</sup> consisted of introductions and shared histories. The following day and half were beginning steps to relationship building, including a survey of current realities and hopes/vision for the future, which were explored and considered as a group, and in smaller pairs.

On Oct 25, Discussion Facilitator Denise Bolduc began two days of structured dialogue that shared:

- a discussion framework
- practical relationship building exercises
- pathways to meaningful postures in sharing interest from Non Indigenous Advisors
- responses and experiences from Indigenous Advisors
- visioning exchanges, and
- next steps

Denise shared her considerable experience in bringing together Indigenous and Non Indigenous allies through the lens of arts and culture, with foundational concepts that will inform the development of our three-year project:

1. Frame any discussion by acknowledging the land and territory where it is situated. First Nations must be acknowledged as past, present and future custodians of the particular territory, in the now as opposed to only referencing any historical association with the land. The careful use of language around this issue is key, as even the word 'traditional' can move the listener out of a place of attention to current issues, particularly those around ongoing treaty agreements. If this is your land, then where are your stories?
2. Some guiding values for relationships are: Fairness, Non-judgemental stance, Humbleness, Respectful, Mutual mentorship and reciprocal relationships, Understanding of what privilege is. We have all come to the discussion with a common desire, create a safe environment, courageous (being able to recognize you are wrong/do not know/or can't take the lead), ready to work hard, and allow people to admit when they don't know. This is an organically evolving process, that must be flexible and open to curious inquiry.
3. When working with Indigenous people you are learning from a reciprocal relationship, which is deepened through mutual acknowledgement of both the exchange, and the significance of the relationship. Acknowledgement is about being humble, and respectful of the different needs and visions that exist in every person and every community. Western ideas are often based on a hierarchy, but most Indigenous people use a circular exchange. Everybody brings something equally important to contribute. Some guiding values are fairness; being non-judgemental, being humble, honesty, openness, patience, and an awareness that nothing is static, everything is evolving.
4. The lens of the other, often typified by the stance of the anthropologist, looks in at cultural and artistic practices, and then extracts. This perspective is reductive and inert. It's an example of a potential relationship that has no way to grow or benefit any participants. It's a similar experience when Indigenous artists are being constantly asked to educate so others can become 'experts'. The burden of education should belong to the person who poses the question, as should be white fragility.. Colonial/settler privilege, naïve as it can be, needs to be parsed and exposed, so that any one-sided condescension can be transformed by trust.
5. Some questions to return to as we move through this project are:  
 What is a culturally safe space?  
 What does culturally safe mean?  
 Are developing relationships driven by new money and trends, or do they reflect longterm commitment?  
 In terms of the overall narrative, whose lens is being arrayed, and what lens are you seeing through? Being clear about whether we come from the western privileged or the Indigenous worldview.  
 Do we fully appreciate the diversity of the cultures encircled by the word Indigenous? We must respect the need for developments, relationships, solutions, projects to evolve organically from the specific needs of a place, situation and partnership. The difficulty of articulating this complexity, particularly to funding bodies, is a constant challenge.

## **partnership overview**

Cole, Sue and Judy spoke about their personal inspiration for this initiative, and the moments that clarified for them the immediate need for action in this area. Our partner organizations share the sense that the time for action is now, and that Indigenous performance is trending. Therefore, we are again hearing a lot of extraction proposals around Canada's 150<sup>th</sup> celebrations, for example, and projects aligned with short term values that don't reflect fundamental attitude change or the desire for longterm relationships. The sense that any contribution we can make to removing fear or concern about making mistakes, or removing barriers to respectful exchange and engagement is valuable, and necessary.

Advisory Presenter partners began by declaring their vision and commitment to the project, an inversion of the typical intercultural process where Indigenous people often speak first. The Indigenous partners were witnesses to the presenters' thoughts, and their understanding of the issues. There were some thematic commonalities:

Audience development and engagement is an age-old theme in this arena, and creating change will require finding a new space for discussion, creativity, resource and development. Taking the initiative to go out there and find key people in Indigenous communities is an important responsibility that lies with presenters.

Situating autonomy and power within a partnership is a balancing act, and public acknowledgement must be carefully managed to recognize the expertise and connections to the community that make innovative and successful projects possible.

There is a lot of hurt out there. Much of the harming is still ongoing through existing policy and ongoing negotiations. For many First Nations, the artistic act is an act of sovereignty.

Advisors all spoke about effecting overall general change at all levels within their organizations, and their desire to change and be inclusive in a more positive way. They expressed that they are committed to learning and changing practice..

## **practical exercise 2 – responses and experiences**

Indigenous participants commented with response and experiences. There were many detailed stories about collaborative initiatives that were not productive or reciprocal, and how that manifested for the organizations involved.

Participants spoke about high profile work with larger institutions, and the mismanaged expectations and unspoken attitudes that emerged during the process. Experiences 'off reservation' and the constant struggle to find opportunities for respectful knowledge transfer.

We explored how to get inclusion right, for example by integrating it early on in the planning process. We outlined some of the formulas that have worked with festivals and showcases and also some challenges in countering the appropriation of symbols, and how language must be deconstructed.

We shared stories about expertise and identity being mined by a team unaware of inclusive postures, and the need for reciprocal decision making. Does passion and the great need for Indigenous stories crowd out the process of creating long term trust? We heard how smudging is often not accommodated during, despite explanations, documents and tools being available and brought forward.

Some overarching comments from PE2:

- the importance of everyone from the box office up being aware & ready
- the impact of simple gestures like feeding or picking up an artist
- always aiming to give everybody what they want and what they feel they deserve
- using 'everyone has a voice, everyone has a role' as an operational imperative
- you can't dumb things down, and you can't silo information as a short cut
- the protective stance Indigenous people have taken, due to vulnerability

### **practical exercise 3 – visioning partnerships**

The Advisory considered what could happen in three years in its own communities. What could help the vision to move forward? How could the presenters create opportunities, or make space for Indigenous participation? We considered how striking it was that just having an Indigenous person working at the box office changes the dynamic. We noted that skills development must happen in each community, and at all layers of the organization. We assessed the need for cultural training, sensitivity training, communication training and how each of these areas will require the advisory participants to act as leaders within their regions.

Fears expressed by the mainstream presenters included: lack of audience; how to engage the audience in a different way; the expectations of their audiences and their needs to meet those expectations; of doing things wrong with respect to dealing with Indigenous culture; and how to access Indigenous performers.

Some notable themes from PE3:

- cultural guiding principles/ protocols that can be transmitted as operational values to staff, including respecting the role of seniors/elders and offering patience, accommodating their issues, and treating their presence as a gift. This is especially important with Indigenous elders, but applies to non Indigenous seniors/elders as well. Elders are the most important guests.
- the differences in approaches to parenting at public events in Indigenous communities compared to mainstream
- underused spaces (lobbies, black boxes) and their potential to present, support and develop Indigenous artists
- artist tool kits, and capacity building for artists
- how to include front of house and tech staff
- creating culturally safe places
- cultural safety training for everyone on staff, from part time volunteers all the way up to boards/stakeholders

- visiting local Indigenous communities, attending arts events, and inviting Indigenous partners/community members as guests to presenter events

**outcomes**

The advisory retreat closed with a personal message from each participant, detailing what tangible next steps would be taken immediately as a result of the gathering. The commitments ranged from articulating needs clearly, to sharing resources, to visiting additional regional organizations and developing new relationships. We were asked to go home and make tangible our process, and move forward with positivity, right away.

The vision that we articulating is of a shared foundation, with individual houses built in each region.

The **second Advisor meeting** was convened in Brantford at the Sanderson Centre, as well as at the Woodlands Cultural Centre, and provided site visits, opportunities to engage with Centre staff on both sides, and face-to-face meetings with all project participants.

We gained clarity on the important distinctions between the centres. Woodland is a more community based space that also includes a museum, a library, and functions as a resources and language centre. Sanderson is focussed on presenting.

The site visits were especially important. In particular, we felt the reality that Woodlands had a specific context, in that the facility itself was developed from a residential school. We came to a deeper understanding of Janis' comments that they have been in reconciliation since day one of their existence, and that heightened emotions in the community around the buildings' history fuelled a lot of dialogue and opinion about its subsequent use. We also had the opportunity to meet staff, see renovations in progress, experience art installations and museum work, and explore the kind of programs that the centre produces.

Some key issues surfacing through partnership meetings and activities came to the fore.

Sanderson/Woodlands have been moving forward as a strong partnership since Advisory Meeting I, and are in many ways the most progressive relationship in our pilot. There have been staff meetings and development, working towards strengthening, understanding and interconnections in a respectful way. They have shared cross promotion initiatives into both communities, and the Sanderson has begun programming Indigenous performance.

However, even with willing and engaged partners, there have been challenges with implementation of shared projects. Both Janis and Glenn were committed to territory acknowledgement. Janis went to council and went through an extensive process to get wording and approvals from the leadership in her community. Glenn was personally supportive of this, but found he could not move it forward in his community. So, despite the models proposed by TRC, and with partners sharing the desire to move this forward, we still cannot implement this at the Sanderson. We are left with questions around how to get the larger municipal structure to buy in, and the importance of having every level of an organization, from the front lines to the top, acknowledging the importance of this work.

Still, Brantford/Six Nations moved into a deeper level of engagement immediately following our first meeting. Glenn and Janis developed the Artists Presentation Capacity Building Project:

*Artists Presentation Capacity Building Project will provide workshops in production, mentorship on stage presence, marketing and contractual obligations to provide artists with the next level of success with the culmination of two presentation opportunities for the artists in front of regional presenters. This is the first time that Sanderson Centre, Thru the Red Door and Woodland Cultural Centre will be working together to develop emerging artists ready for presentation.*

*The Artist Presentation Capacity Building Project will begin in studio at Thru the Red Door at Six Nations from June 5 - June 30 for 4 hours each day for audio clip and videography.*

*Rehearsal with a focus on stage presence, with a renowned First Nations musician in a mentorship capacity, will take place at Woodland Cultural Centre on July 10 - July 28 for 4 hours each day as well as an introduction on stage plots and technical riders.*

*Rehearsals for the presentation will take place September 23, at Woodland Cultural Centre. The Visitor Services Coordinator and Outreach Coordinator from Woodland Cultural Centre will also work with the artists on individual development of the importance of social media presence and identity.*

*A Lobby Series at the Sanderson Centre will be the performance component of this project and will take place September 27 where regional presenters from Ontario Presenters Network will be in attendance to see the following proposed artists who hopefully will see future bookings.*

<i>Lacey Hill</i>	<i>The Silver Boys</i>	<i>Aaron Henry</i>
<i>The Ollivanders</i>	<i>Rebecca Miller</i>	<i>Tahnee Williams</i>
<i>Chase Jarrett</i>	<i>Randy Miller</i>	

St Catharines' First Ontario/Carousel pair has taken a different path, and is working on a festival of Indigenous Arts. FirstOntario is screening Angry Inuk for Canadian Film day, and they have spent time together as a pair, making reciprocal introductions in the community. The larger obstacle for this community is that Jessica is new to Carousel and St Catharines, and is still finding her own footing within the community. Both are committed, and yet struggling to find time to advance these more relationship based initiatives around their already dense work schedules and limited resources.

In Peterborough/Curve Lake, the

So one outcome of this pilot year has been a clear picture of how strongly variables like governance structure, operations and the community ecosphere can impact any given project. That there is really no overarching model that can be universally implemented, but rather that making carefully curated connections between optimal partners in any given community is really the only and best way to have impact.

Our overarching dialogue touched on the fact that creating a safety net where people are free to say what they want is dependant on participants that honour respect and reciprocity. That the process itself of finding community partners that are willing and strong is a primary challenge to the project. A clear model for the advisory team to be involved in mentorship and development of subsequent participants was delivered.

OP outlined a planned refocus for the annual Ontario Regional presenter gathering (Blue Sky Day) in fall 2017. The Brantford partners will co-host, and the gathering will include an Indigenous

presenting framework, including showcases, relationship building and professional development. We will also deliver a report on the IPPDI and resulting models.

CAPACOA reiterated its commitment to not only this project, but that the board had supported a commitment to IPPDI essentially for the balance of the organization's lifetime.

The **third Advisory meeting** was held in early February in Buckhorn/Curve Lake. It was an opportunity to advance the partnership project plans, consolidate our accrued knowledge and further engage in visioning, to establish trust.

Our Brantford participants had undertaken a staff exchange so that all levels of the organizations could know each other and work together. Many details surfaced in terms of simple outcomes developed by staff. For example, the Sanderson FOH team talked about the fact that during dance competition season, they are often asked where they can spend the day while waiting for their child. They generally don't make any suggestions, but Woodlands is ideal. So we were able to identify the fact that having staff immersed in the other organizations' experience enhances the relationships exponentially.

The Sanderson staff was able to request some direction and gaining an understanding of cultural knowledge, and the importance of that, and the cultural practices in relationship to their cultural practices, which will be useful for a Kaha:wii performance scheduled a month away. The staff is prepared to understand ahead of time, as opposed to coping with any kind of conflict that can arise once the artists are in the space.

After several months of meeting, the level of trust in our group was such that our Indigenous partners shared highly intimate observations and detailed narratives about the impact of cultural loss. The vulnerability that develops when a community is in the process of trying to re-educate itself about its own past is huge. The need to 'define' what belongs and what doesn't in terms of cultural heritage (often imposed by outside allies or partners), is actually destructive as it forces an agenda into a space where there is really no way to know where things will land.

Our facilitator, Denise Bolduc, noted that Indigenous communities often can't offer time and support to others trying to learn, as they often have none for themselves. We referred back to comments about the skyrocketing value of Indigenous culture in Canada, and how that is often a setup to failure when funding is involved. As people become aware of the enormous latent cultural value in partnerships with Indigenous creators and organizations, they often practice a type of cultural extraction, where 'Indigeneity' is mined for projects. Even well meaning allies use a model where they are positioned to develop short-term projects dependant on Indigenous cultural creators and product, but are not involved long term with the creators or producers.

Indigenous organizations face serious underfunding and are often lacking in resources. Staff is stretched and limited in ways that many mainstream presenting venues are not – they do not have access to marketing departments, Boards, patrons and other supportive structures.

We explored the intricacy of restoring a web of cultural structures that were related, but distinct. Particularly when these communities and structures had disagreements and conflict with one another. One example is that smudging protocols are unique to certain territories. Even within territories,

elders and community members often disagree about its form, and even its use. This same density of environmental unknowns exists around dialogue about status, on reserve-off reserve, about the development of human resources, and methodologies. Janis (Six Nations/Brantford) believes that there is a place for a research project around capturing the inquiry and documentation of current methodologies within the Indigenous arts and culture sector, so that there is a baseline snapshot of the current operational structures and procedures, rather than simply assumptions.

To wrap up the final meeting, we all acknowledged that we needed to understand the complexity of the issues involved, but not let it stop us from moving forward where we can. It was expressed that our Indigenous partners want allies to be there for them, being beside as opposed to ahead or behind, even if to push them forward. And the expectation should not be that there should be a continual request for this support, but that it is a given. Any white fragility that impacts this stance should be examined and discussed. Furthermore, relationship building between Indigenous community organizations and settler allies will be challenged, questioned, and asked to justify its own existence. Identifying individuals for potential participation in this ongoing project must be examined through this lens.

You can plant the seed, but you can't walk away from it.

### **Examples of current outcomes for project partners:**

As a direct result of the relationship building between CAPACOA, IPAA and OP, organizational change is already manifest in our operational outlook. For 2017 CAPACOA has committed to hiring Indigenous producer, Denise Bolduc for their bi-annual conference. There will be an increase in Indigenous cultural material at the conference, and an emphasis on creating a welcoming and inclusive event. This new relationship and programming initiative is a direct result of our pilot year activities.

An operating framework has been established for the three partner organizations, that quantifies their involvement and week to week participation obligations.

CAPACOA will also hire an intern from the Indigenous community as a first step this year.

A Statement of Presenting Principles has been drafted for Ontario Presents by advisor Glenn Brown (Brantford). It is a first step to educating the constituency about presenting Indigenous culture and developing relationships with Indigenous organizations in arts and culture.

A presenting program, as well as staff operational exchange has been launched between the Brantford partners, which includes elements of artist development, curatorial development, and new opportunities for the presentation of Indigenous cultural content.

As a result of the highly innovative and productive Brantford collaboration, IPPDI is including funding contributions for participant communities in all three years of the proposed project, with additional funding in the following year for continuing activities.

Our St Catharines partners are involved in producing a new Indigenous Festival in September, which will provide a natural meeting for our advisors to convene.

Detailed notes to all meetings, as well as interim and final reports, have been developed as reference tools for the project.

## Three year workplan

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### Year I : 2017-18

1. Commencement of the **three-year Ontario Regional Project**
2. Official appointment of co managers Denise Bolduc and Judy Harquail
3. An operational communication plan and work plan for the three principal organizations and the regional committees is developed and mutually agreed on in an MOU
4. Convert Ontario Presents annual presenters event (Blue Sky Day, Oct 2017) to a retreat in Brantford to witness local pilot program, showcase regional artists, and workshop with pilot participants
5. Three new target communities selected, with local collaborators defined and confirmed
6. Identification and mobilization of any further local Cultural Connectors
7. Consultative Travel in target communities, to deliver Community Consultations and Retreats, introducing practical exercises, dialogue about issues of cultural safety and productive relationship building, and presentation of our successful models
8. Development travel for Indigenous Presenting Advisors
9. Create a communication and dissemination plan for sharing process and programming
10. Development and implementation of a structured collaboration framework for each region, based on successful models from the pilot year
11. Create a strategy where previous pilot participants become mentors to new program communities. This mentor and advisory team will be a resource for all subsequent participants, and will meet, and participate in program delivery wherever possible.
12. Initiation of Protocol Principles and Tool Development, including the development of an arts based Indigenous Cultural Safety Training document, based on models from the health care sector in both Canada and Australia
13. Development of a Workshop strategy, (including Critical Response and Liberating Structures which are communication strategies) to complement regional meetings, inclusive of ALL layers of staff
14. Development of a strategy for Sensitivity Training, and cultural knowledge training workshops as in house training for presenters
15. Research travel and delegation attendance at one significant event, eg Living Ritual, July 2017 (Indigenous Performance Gathering in Six Nations (Kaha:wi Dance Theatre), or IPAA Intertribal Gathering (Northern Ontario).
16. Research travel and attendance at the inaugural Festival of Indigenous Culture in Ste Catharines
17. Three new community retreats, with relationship building, skills development and mentoring.
18. An evaluation and reporting protocol identified and initiated, with a transfer of these skills to the Indigenous communities we are working with in the form of tools and mentoring. Research and development into metrics and procedures that are aligned with these communities' values. An interim report developed after year I.

## Year II : 2018-19

1. Three new target communities selected, with local collaborators defined and confirmed
2. An operational communication plan and work plan for the three principal organizations and the new participant committees is mutually agreed on in an MOU
3. Identification and mobilization of any further local Cultural Connectors
4. Ontario Presents produces an Blue Sky Day, fall 2018 with regional artists showcases and workshop with new participants
5. Consultative Travel in target communities, to deliver Community Consultations and Retreats, introducing practical exercises, dialogue about issues of cultural safety and productive relationship building, and presentation of our successful models (principals of IPAA, CAPACOA, OP and Indigenous Facilitator)
6. Development travel for Indigenous Presenting Advisors
7. Development and implementation of a structured collaboration framework for the new region, based on successful models from the previous years
8. Mentors from previous years visit and consult with new participant communities
9. Cultural Safety and Learning Tools are deployed at skills development meetings, workshops and retreats.
10. Development of a Workshop strategy to complement regional meetings, inclusive of ALL layers of staff
11. Sensitivity Training, and Cultural Knowledge Training workshops are offered to new participant presenters
12. Research travel and delegation attendance at one significant performing arts event, gathering, festival or conference
13. Three new community retreats, with relationship building, skills development and mentoring.
14. An evaluation and reporting knowledge base is transferred to Indigenous participants in the form of tools and mentoring. Metrics and procedures, aligned with local community values, are incorporated into reporting. An interim report developed after year II.

### Year III : 2019-20

1. Three new target communities selected, with local collaborators defined and confirmed
2. An operational communication plan and work plan for the three principal organizations and the new participant committees is mutually agreed on in an MOU
3. Identification and mobilization of any further local Cultural Connectors
4. Ontario Presents produces an Blue Sky Day, Fall 2019 with regional artists showcases and workshop with new participants
5. Consultative Travel in target communities, to deliver Community Consultations and Retreats, introducing practical exercises, dialogue about issues of cultural safety and productive relationship building, and presentation of our successful models (principals of IPAA, CAPACOA, OP and Indigenous Facilitator)
6. Development travel for Indigenous Presenting Advisors
7. Development and implementation of a structured collaboration framework for the new region, based on successful models from the previous years
8. Mentors from previous years visit and consult with new participant communities
9. Cultural Safety and Learning Tools are deployed at skills development meetings, workshops and retreats.
10. Development of a Workshop strategy to complement regional meetings, inclusive of ALL layers of staff
11. Sensitivity Training, and Cultural Knowledge Training workshops are offered to new participant presenters
12. Research travel and delegation attendance at one significant performing arts event, gathering, festival or conference
13. Three new community retreats, with relationship building, skills development and mentoring.
14. An evaluation and reporting knowledge base is transferred to Indigenous participants in the form of tools and mentoring. Metrics and procedures, aligned with local community values, are incorporated into reporting.
15. A travelling performance showcase of the Indigenous artists featured during the initiative, plus local indigenous artists, is toured to 12 participant presenter venues. This is a ticketed event, supported by additional project grant funding, and presenters will contribute over 85% of the costs through in kind venue, production and ticket revenue.
16. A final report for the three year project is developed and submitted

## key elements

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**Presenters** in Canada span a range of categories that include venue based presenters (municipal/university/independent); community presenters (often volunteer); and festivals (often nfp). There are also specialized presenters and music impresarios that include producing artists, schools, civic groups and private spaces like restaurants and bars. In the Canadian performing arts ecosystem, presenters curate their seasons by selecting touring-ready performances, and pay artists' fees to producers. They provide the venue, supply technical support and promote events. Presenters play a crucial role in providing for the needs of their communities, by functioning as leaders and facilitators for regional cultural goals. They are driven by a shared passion for supporting emerging and established artists, developing audiences, and building community. To achieve this, many participate in regional and national presenting networks.

**Producers** in Canada often take the form of artistic organizations that develop their own work, as well as take it to market in the form of a self-present. They can also have touring functionality in house rather than rely on agents. Self production is often a response to a lack of presenting resources in the immediate environment. Independent producers can also function as impresarios, by providing the venue, technical support and marketing events, as well as functioning as artistic and cultural leaders in their regions.

**Protocols** are guidelines that ensure appropriate ways of engaging Indigenous cultural material, and interacting with Indigenous people and their communities.

Regional partners will work together to ensure proper acknowledgement of territory and unique protocols of their direct Indigenous communities shall be instrumental in a respectful relationship building partnership.

Protocols encourage ethical conduct and promote interaction based on good faith and mutual respect. As an example, IPAA has developed a Smudging Document, which is a resource to facilitate the relationship between Indigenous performing artists and venues by acknowledging the protected practice of burning traditional medicines as it relates to the performing arts:

<http://ipaa.ca/resources/smudging-document/>

**Workshops** will be offered in all targeted regions. Relationship development will be explored, with a view to creating cultural bridges between colonial/settler and Indigenous worldviews as the focus. After local consultation, protocol resources will be created to be responsive to issues and customs specific to the region. Leaders will include Denise Bolduc and Judy Harquail, representatives from the principal organizations, Indigenous leaders, as well as Cultural Connectors, chosen to lead on behalf of local communities.

**Cultural Connectors** are individuals chosen from within Indigenous communities for their ability to offer guidance around traditional knowledge value systems. They are voices of experience, willing

to engage in meaningful discussion around the intersection of culturally specific knowledge, inclusion and performance, and collaborative postures.

**Cultural Safety** - The process toward becoming culturally safe includes three key elements: Cultural awareness (understanding difference), cultural sensitivity (self awareness: recognizing difference & how one's own realities/experiences impact thinking) and, cultural safety (enables the service/practice is defined/determined by the person/group from the another culture). Although these are related concepts, it is important to understand that they are not the same as each other. All need to be achieved to be in a position to negotiate culturally safe interactions with others. A practitioner who can understand his/her own culture and the concept of transfer of power between dominant and less dominant groups can be culturally safe in a number of contexts.

**Sensitivity training courses** are a precursor to full fledged engagement with the local Indigenous communities. Cultural sensitivity training precedes cultural education, and is part of a continuum of cultural competence. IPPDI will draw on existing models in Australia and Canada for baseline information that will then incorporate regional practice and experiences relevant to each participating community.

There are excellent existing models of approaches to decolonising, cultural safety training, and incorporating Indigenous cultural values in the fields of health care and mental health. Some significant work has been done in this field in our pilot communities.

However, our pilot year has allowed us to understand that a pan-Canadian, or non-specific, approach will not be effective without direct community input and a regard for the unique situation in each region. We will provide development tools adapted to each community.

**Indigenous Facilitators** are individuals engaged to facilitate research during all phases of the project, as well as at professional development workshops for presenters in targeted regions during Phase II. We will rely on local expertise and allies of Indigenous culture for context and communication.

**Evaluation and reporting** will be undertaken at the end of each project Phase, with tools and reports developed and managed by the principal organizations.

IPPDI will develop a program of skills development for evaluation and reporting that will mobilize and transfer these important techniques to our participating organizations. We will seek to identify an effective means of utilizing metrics that acknowledge Indigenous values and processes, and we will create model for that.

**Potential partnering organizations** that can support this work are include IPAA members like Debajehmujig Theatre Group and Creation Centre on Manitoulin Island, Aanmitagzi in North Bay and Cree Fest near James Bay. These Indigenous performing arts organizations will provide invaluable knowledge about presenting in rural and remote areas of Ontario. Potential target regions are Red

Lake/Kenora; Sioux Lookout/Dryden; North Bay; Manitoulin Island; Guelph/Six Nations/Brantford/Milton; Burlington/St. Catharines; Kingston/Ottawa; Walpole Island/Chatham; Thunder Bay; Parry Sound/Barrie; Sudbury; Timmins; Sault Ste Marie.

**Active partnership opportunities** for Phase II exist with Ontario Presents members in Kingston, Guelph, North Bay, St. Catharines, Burlington, Brantford, Oakville, Orleans, Chatham, Milton, Markham. Much of the next steps will depend on the Indigenous stakeholders in any given region.

## Organizational Profiles

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### CAPACOA

#### ***Mission Statement***

The Canadian Arts Presenting Association/l'Association canadienne des organismes artistiques (CAPACOA) serves the performing arts touring and presenting community through its commitment to integrate the performing arts into the lives of all Canadians. CAPACOA takes initiative in providing leadership, knowledge, communications, skills development and advocacy on behalf of its members and within the arts presenting community.

#### ***Mandate and Objectives***

(a) To promote the development of the presentation of the arts in Canada by:

- promoting and encouraging a greater knowledge and appreciation of the presentation of the performing arts
- encouraging the touring of artists and attractions throughout all regions of Canada
- providing information on artists and attractions touring regionally and nationally
- assisting the presenters of the arts in Canada with the coordination of bookings
- providing opportunities for the professional development of presenters in Canada

and

(b) To promote communication and understanding between presenters of the arts in Canada by:

- providing a forum for the exchange of views concerning the presentation of the performing arts generally
- publishing and disseminating materials concerning the arts and presentation of the arts
- providing information on regional and federal policies which relate to the presentation of the arts
- providing an opportunity to make contacts nationwide

#### ***History***

Since its founding in 1985, CAPACOA has fostered and developed a pan-Canadian network for presenters, presenting networks, artist managers/agents and performing arts administrators.

- CAPACOA began hosting an annual conference for the sector in 1988, bringing together cultural entrepreneurs and key industry stakeholders working across national and international performing arts sectors. A committee is struck every year from Board and community members, and programming is developed with a chosen theme.
- CAPACOA was a founding member of Cultural Human Resources Council (CHRC) and Trade Team Canada””Cultural Goods and Services.
- In 2002, in partnership with the Professional Association of Canadian Theatre, CAPACOA also helped to establish the Magnetic North Theatre Festival.
- CAPACOA was a key partner in the development of the Canada Arts Presentation Fund (2001) and was critical in helping to define its objectives and goals.

- CAPACOA began working in partnership with Canadian Heritage (2003) to develop and implement the annual Regional Presenting Networks meeting (now called National Network Meeting) where key board and staff assembled from across Canada to discuss issues facing the presenting milieu. This meeting has expanded (2009) to include all major presenting networks (multi and discipline specific).
- In 2007, CAPACOA participated on the CHRC's Performing Arts steering committee in the creation of the Presenters Competency Chart and Profile. This highly-effective tool has enabled multiple presenting organizations to evaluate and conduct needs-assessment on behalf of their own memberships, leading to skills-development, and ultimately the advancement of the field.
- CAPACOA launched The Succession Plan (2009), a mentorship and peer network development program for new generation arts professionals with a focus on the presenting and touring sector.
- CAPACOA conducted the study The Value of Presenting: A Study of Performing Arts Presentation in Canada (2011-2013) in collaboration with presenting networks and funding agencies across the country. This one of a kind action research has been an important driver of the discussion around the notion of public engagement in the arts.

## Ontario Presents

Founded in 1988 as CCI - Ontario Presenting Network, Ontario Presents is a member-based, not-for-profit arts service organization that works to support the arts presenting sector in Ontario. Our network is comprised of performing arts centres, municipal venue presenters, academic venue presenters, volunteer presenters, festivals, artistic companies, performing artists, artist managers, arts consultants and individuals who work collaboratively to improve arts presentation practice in the Province of Ontario.

Ontario Presents primary focus is on the health of its members and their organizations. Ontario Presents operates a number of participatory programs and services that help members build capacity, develop leadership and create opportunities to grow and diversify their audiences.

### Mission

To develop Ontario's presenting arts leadership through *networking* and *professional development*

### Vision

A live performance for everyone in Ontario: an active curator for the performing arts in every community: a lively engagement between the two.

### Values

We value the participation of our professional and volunteer presenters, artists, artist representatives and business consultants by:

- Encouraging, supporting & developing groups that present professional performing arts in Ontario communities
- Fostering networking, professional development, advocacy & access to resources
- Supporting our members' curatorial visions
- Fostering and encouraging collegiality, trust, and openness within our membership
- Encouraging the presentation of new art forms and the appreciation of quality and engaging performing arts performances
- Developing strong & healthy leadership to sustain Ontario's arts presenting industry

## Who We Are

Indigenous Performing Arts Alliance (IPAA) is a federally incorporated not for profit organization based in Toronto, ON. IPAA connects the Indigenous Performance Network emerging across Turtle Island (North America).

## Membership

IPAA membership includes [Indigenous Performing Artists](#) and [Organizations](#) as well as non-Indigenous [Allies](#).

## How We Got Here

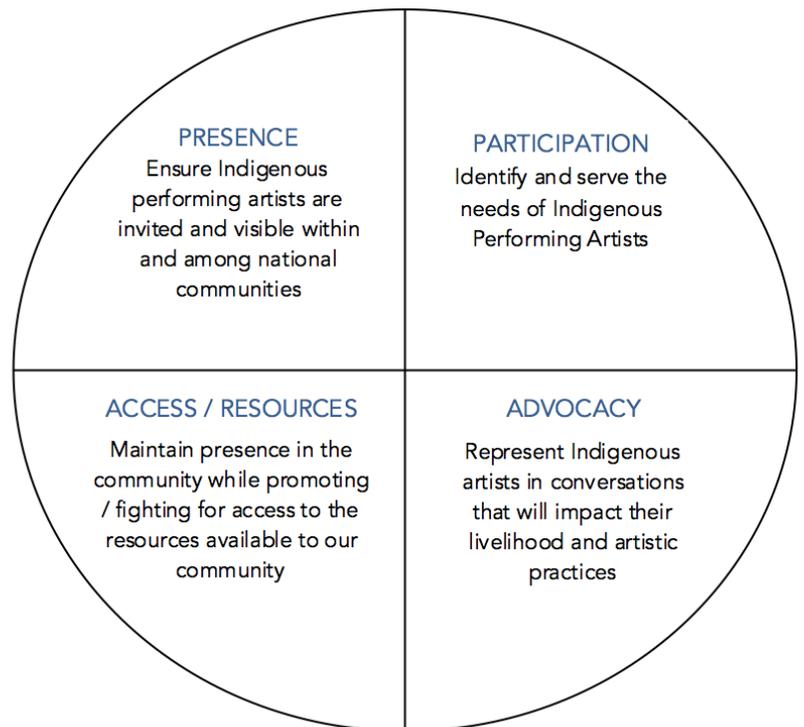
In its foundational years, IPAA underwent several conceptual transformations & titles:

- (i) National Aboriginal Theatre Alliance
- (ii) National Aboriginal Arts Alliance

Thereafter, the Board of Directors adjusted IPAA's title to reflect the organization's Indigenous ethics (supporting the work of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis performing artists) and broad interdisciplinary approach.

IPAA became a federally incorporated not-for-profit organization on March 16th, 2005.

Throughout its evolution IPAA has matured into a critical organization in the national ecology of the performing arts. Markers of this maturation include establishment of an office space in Toronto, ON, a national board of directors, the engagement of an Executive Director, and securing of operating funding from Canada Council for the Arts.



## National Partnerships

Playwrights Guild of Canada's **Equity In Theatre** (EIT), Canadian Arts Presenting Association (CAPACOA), and National Arts Centre English Theatre's exploration of Indigenous performance called **The Summit** in Banff (2014) which informed **The Study / Repast** in collaboration with **Debajehmujig Storytellers** on Manitoulin Island, ON.

## Indigenous Leadership

Cole Alvis (Métis) is the Executive Director of IPAA. Previous Coordinators include **Falen Johnson** (Mohawk/Tuscarora), **Michelle Olson** (Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in First Nation), **Suzanne Hawkins** and **Denise Bolduc** (French and Anishnawbe of the Batchewana First Nations) as well as other committed community members volunteering countless hours to the creation and maintenance of this organization.

## History of Gatherings

**1990** - Telling our own Story: Appropriation and Indigenous Performing Artists

**June 1998** - National Native Theatre Symposium

**Sept. 1998** - To See Proudly: First Peoples Arts Conference

**June 2000** - Coyote's Roundup

**2000 – 2001** - Meetings of the volunteer committee NATA (National Aboriginal Theatre Alliance)

**June 2001** - 3rd National Gathering of Aboriginal Theatre

**2001 – 2002** - Meetings of the NAAA (National Aboriginal Arts Alliance Committee)

**Nov. 2001** - Nimitohtak: First Nation Dance Symposium (co-sponsored by NATA)

**March 2005** - IPAA becomes a federally incorporated not-for-profit organization

**Oct. 2008** - IPAA Think Tank @ Debajehmujig Creation Centre (Manitoulin Island)

**Oct. 2013** - Intertribal Gathering, Ontario Showcase in Toronto, ON

**April 2014** - The Summit, a partnership with National Arts Centre: English Theatre (Banff, AB)

**Oct. 2014** - Intertribal Gathering, Showcase in partnership with Saskatchewan Native Theatre Company (Saskatoon, SK)

**Feb. 2015** - Talking Stick Festival Industry Series, Protocols and the Indigenous Performance Network (Vancouver, BC)

**May 2015** - The Study / Repast a partnership with Debajehmujig Storytellers & National Arts Centre (Manitowaning, ON)

## Future Events

**Aug. 2015** - Indigenous Performance Network (IPN) Meeting at Prismatic Festival (Halifax, NS)

**Nov. 2015** - Intertribal Gathering, Indigenous Language Showcase (Toronto, ON)

**Oct. 2016** - Intertribal Gathering Yukon Showcase in collaboration with Aboriginal Curatorial Collective (Whitehorse, YK)

**It's free to join!**

<http://ipaa.ca/join/member/>

IPAA acknowledges the generous support of:



**Conseil des arts  
du Canada**

**Canada Council  
for the Arts**

### **IPAA Administration**

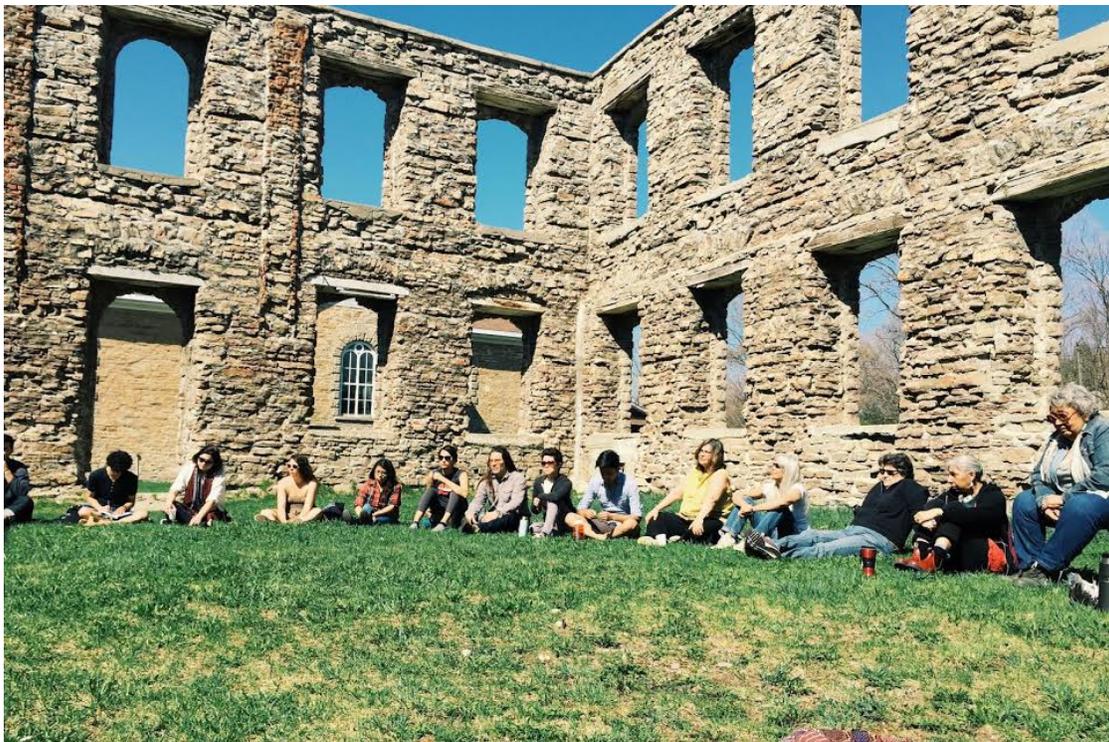
Cole Alvis, Executive Director (Métis)  
Brittany Ryan, Network Coordinator (Métis/Ojibwe)  
Janet Antone, Membership Coordinator (Oneida)  
Lena Recollet, Social Media Administrator (Ojibwe)

### **IPAA Executive Board of Directors**

Jill Carter, academic, University of Toronto (Anishinaabe) Secretary, ON  
Christine Sokaymoh Frederick, AD of Alberta Aboriginal Arts (Cree-Métis) Treasurer, AB  
Michelle Olson, AD of Raven Spirit (Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in) President, BC  
Corey Payette, AD of Urban Ink Productions (Oji-Cree) Vice-President, BC

### **IPAA Board of Directors**

Keith Barker, actor, playwright (Métis) Member, ON  
Columpa Bobb, playwright, director & educator (Tsleil-Waututh) Member, MB  
Ryan Cunningham, Artistic Director Alberta Aboriginal Arts (Métis) Member, ON  
Falen Johnson, Planet IndigenUS (Mohawk/Tuscarora) Member, ON  
Margo Kane, Artistic Director Full Circle (Cree/Saulteaux) Member, BC  
Paul Seesequasis, Editor in Chief Theytus Books (Cree) Member, BC  
Melaina Sheldon, Arts & Events Teslin Tlingit Council (Inland Tlingit) Member, YT



IPAA @ Debajehmujig Ruins for **The Study/Repast** (2015) Photo by Brittany Ryan  
(L-R: Kieran Wilson, Brefney Caribou-Curtin, Samantha Brown, Joelle Peters, Darla Contois, Andy Moro, Tara Beagan, Aaron Wells, Margo Kane, Jani Lauzon, Deborah Ratelle, Monique Mojica & Muriel Miguel)