



Dreaming our Cultural Spaces

Sioux Lookout

Planning Team: Donna Giles, Laurel Wood, Jenny Morrow

Co-Facilitators: Garnet Angekoneb, Hana Beitzl, Laurel Wood, Charles Williams

i. Participants

Genny Kakekaspan	Sioux Lookout Area Aboriginal Mgmt
Laurie Moyer	Min. of Citizenship & Culture, Sport & Recreation Branch
Sophie Trist	Windigo F. N. Council
Laurel Wood	Sioux Lookout Anti-Racism Committee (SLARC)
Emma Kenequanash	Tikingagan Child and Family Services
Charles Williams	SLARC/Former Wegamow Man
Larry Beardy	Keewatin Patricia District School Board
Tom Chisel	Nodin Child & Family Intervention Services
Aileen Urquhart	St. Andrew's United Church
Alan Howie	Municipality of Sioux Lookout
Donna Giles	Community Artist
Hana Beitzl	Northern Nishnawbe Education Council
Jenny Morrow	Artists Collective
Teddy MacLaren	SLARC, business Mgr.
Laura Kurytnik	Nishnawbe Gamiik Friendship Centre (E.D.)

ii. Workshop Outline

Community Arts Ontario & The Sioux Lookout Anti-Racism Committee (SLARC)
Present:



Dreaming Our Cultural Space(s)
Wednesday March 22nd, 2007
10:00am-4:30pm
Nishnawbe-gamik Friendship Centre, Sioux Lookout

Lunch will be provided

Goals:

- create space for healthy cultural exchange by addressing the legacy of colonialism and the need for shifting values
- address the importance of the Arts for Social Change—how arts shape a community
- identify resources within the community to transform space through relationship building
- encourage intergenerational and cross-cultural participation in dreaming our space(s) -- (Youth, seniors)
- identify and move past the dream to realistic goal setting

Questions to Consider as a community:

- What is your ideal vision of an inclusive space?
- What are the barriers that prevent you from getting there?
- What do you need to do to transform closed doors into open spaces?
- What are you doing to confront racism in your organization/work?
- How could your organization benefit from transformational arts practices?
- How can the notion of “Indigeneity” inform all of your cultural spaces?
- What resources and models can you draw on in your own community to create and maintain healthy inclusive spaces?
- What specific tools can be developed to make the dream a reality?



Who Should Attend:

- Artists
- Cultural workers
- Members of school boards
- Teachers
- Community Members
- City Employees
- Funders & Potential Funders

Workshop Plan

Opening Address

Prayer and Call to Welcome (Aboriginal drum circle and ceremony)
Ralph Johnston, Charles Williams

Defining our Family/Our Community/Our Future?

Identifying Resources in the Community

Introductions: Who are we and what brings us into this common space?

Mapping Exercise facilitated by Aileen Urquhart, Hanna Beitzl, Reena Southwind, Garnet Angkenab?

- ❖ A participatory exercise mapping life before colonisation
- ❖ A mapping of pre-colonial cultural values

Overcoming the Legacy of Colonialism led by an Aboriginal speaker
Larry Beardy

How Art Transforms Community Space



Using art as an Anti-Oppression Tool

Laurel Wood, The Thread Project

Hanna Beitzl, Mural Work with Association of Community Living (power point)—
confirm with Hanna...Art project with Northern communities self esteem

LUNCH BREAK: 1-2PM

Dreaming Cultural Space(s)

Municipal Cultural Planning Presentation by Laurie Moyer

Participatory discussion led by Intergenerational Panel

Best Practice Stories:

New Hospital as a historical and contemporary example of transforming space

Creative Partnerships

From the Dream to Reality

What steps do we take to make the dream a reality?

Gallery: Closing Ceremony

***Viewing of *Everyday Light Arts* display

iii. Highlights

COMMUNITY SHARED VALUES



- Bringing community together
- A need for shifting values—changes
- Healing and reconciliation
- Past informs the future
- Need for safe spaces
- A space to belong
- Sacredness and power of the circle
- Listening to cycle of natural world
- Natural laws prevailing over man made laws
- The power of 7: Mind/Spirit/Heart + 4 elements/4 parts of the medicine wheel/4 directions
- Adaptation/flexibility

LINGERING QUESTIONS/THOUGHTS

- What was in the mind of the colonizer? What was in the mind of those being colonized? What has changed?
- How do we create cultural space(s) that acknowledge/and heal the shared legacy of colonialism?
- What is the nature of true exchange across cultures?
- What would it have been like if the white people that came across were forced to learn our languages and our ways? Where would they be right now? And where would our people be?

SOME OF THE RESULTS OF COLONISATION (Inherited)

- Restlessness
- Anger
- Shame
- Bitterness
- More anger



- More shame
- Guilt
- Silence
- Fear

CULTURAL SPACE(S): What we need

- Where community can come together
- Power of the circle
- Bridging (cultural, spiritual, artistic...)
- Inclusive circle
- Listening through the spirit
- Shared Understanding
- Process of social change (need to define this)
- Accept and Give
- Where stories are shared (no judgment)
- Teaching space
- Learning Space
- Drawn by the healing smell of the sage (What draws you to this space?)
- Relationship building
- Sharing histories
- Holy spaces—"symbolizing a sense of a new day"
- Shifting the inherited relationships/value systems
- Recognizing and fulfilling the needs of the community
- Skills building
- Space outside—an open space without fear and discrimination
- A neutral ground (outside of church or friendship centre)
- Space for the new relationship between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal
- Creative process becomes the space
- Letting of end results—being in process



- Stories on threads and in events (i.e. stories come out in all kinds of mediums)
- Process—act of doing—making a mark
- Genuine invitation to participate—not just token
- Choice to take part—needs to be made and offered

PROCESS OF SOCIAL CHANGE: What does it look like?

- Passing on knowledge—cultural, linguistic knowledge—Educate the children
- Non-native and native children need to learn native traditions
- Risking the personal is important—not to be afraid of making a mistake and asking questions
- Shift the relationship between the givers and receivers to one of exchange
- Move from power relationships to a relationship of exchange between knowledge bases
- Respect First Nations knowledge through Aboriginal histories
- Open the door to new understandings
- Looking back—reflecting—passing on
- Recognize and acknowledge the space between the doors
- Allow for the space for silence and not knowing
- Seeking knowledge beyond history books
- Recognizing the legacy left by residential schools
- Critique the colonial mindset
- Knowing and understanding the power of story