

TESTIFY



a Project of the **INDIGENOUS LAWS** + the **ARTS** Collective

Invitation to participate

**** Creating dynamic partnerships between artists and theorists, to produce works that explore Indigenous Laws ****

Deadline extended to June 25, 2015

**** About the project **** The Testify project aims to create an opportunity for dialogue between artists and legal theorists about Indigenous laws and opportunities for their dynamic and live expression as part of Canadian society. Art and Law are areas that have tremendous impact and influence on our lives. The Law's influence can be monolithic, unquestioned, and normative. Art is a force that has the ability to access the heart and soul in a visceral way. Indigenous Laws combine both: often the strongest and most enduring expression of Indigenous Laws is through art: dance, storytelling, sculpture, song, paintings.

We will curate pairings of legal theorists (lawyers, thinkers) with artists to explore the dynamic and contemporary expression of Indigenous laws; and the impact of Canadian law on Indigenous Laws and Peoples.

The project is open to a wide range of possibilities to explore these themes in more detail, which could include:

- Indigenous laws about lands and territory;
- Indigenous laws for social and environmental justice;
- Indigenous laws and the role, power and protection of Indigenous women, children, youth and/or two-spirited people;

- Ways Indigenous laws have been impacted by the imposition (or denial) of borders and boundaries;
- Denial of Indigenous laws and the criminalization and marginalization of Indigenous Peoples;
- Transformations through and in Indigenous laws;
- Opportunities for a relationship or interaction between Canadian and Indigenous laws; or
- Dreaming a way forward through the dynamic expression of Indigenous laws in broader society.

We welcome submissions from legal thinkers/scholars (who do not necessarily have to be lawyers, we recognize that within Indigenous legal traditions sometimes people who are trained may be from other disciplines or have traditional legal training).

**** Who we are **** We are a group of Indigenous artists and lawyers (some of us both). Our history and experience has involved curating Indigenous art shows, editing a collection of Indigenous writing on the law, and working collaboratively in projects which marry Indigenous laws and art. Collective members: Ardith Walkem (Nlaka'pamux), Pamela Shields (Kainai), Shain Jackson (Sechelt) and Gregory Younging (Cree).

**** Creative partnerships | Double-blind matching process ****

First Step: Artists and legal thinkers will submit applications (Deadline June 15, 2015). Our collective will review these and select people to participate.

Second Step: We will send the "Abstract of Ideas" written by legal thinkers, to the artists (without names being attached at this point). Artists will be asked to identify a 2-3 people (based solely on the writing) that they would be prepared to work collaboratively with.

Third Step: As a collective, we will propose creative pairings that match writers with artists based on the choice of the artists. We will curate – through a double-blind process – pairings artists/legal theorists, who will be asked to work in conversation with each other to create a written work, and artwork.

Fourth Step: Artists/Legal thinkers will work collaboratively to jointly produce works (art-legal writing) in a dynamic dialogue with one another. Our hope is that each will influence the others exploration of ideas related to Indigenous laws. These creative pairings would work with each other, exchanging ideas back and forth, to collaboratively create original, collaborative pairings of writing and art that represent a conversation and dialogue. The written text and art would be a conversation and exploration of an idea related to Indigenous laws or Indigenous Peoples in relationship to the law.

**** Timeline ****Deadline for applications: June 25, 2015. We plan to review the applications and propose creative partnerships by July 15, 2015. Participants should be available to communicate with each other (email, telephone, in person) over the following months. Our goal is to have materials ready by January 2016. We are fundraising to provide a small honoraria, and support for materials, for participants.



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Application | Expression of Interest

**** Due by: June 25, 2015 ****

1. Contact information:

Name:		
Mailing address; postal code		
Telephone:		Cell:
Email:		
Indigenous Nation(s) [if applicable]		

2. There are three categories of pairings (please indicate which you would like to be considered for):

Established Artists/Writers: [you can choose both]

Indigenous | Indigenous

Indigenous | Non-Indigenous

Emerging:

[] Emerging - Pairings could be Indigenous | Indigenous or Indigenous | Non-Indigenous] Artists and theorists will be emerging in their fields – this is for people (of any age, including students) who are just emerging and starting to build a body of writing or other artistic work.

3. Copies of work

Submit 4-7 examples of your past work in PDF, JPEG, CD, or a website or YouTube link. (Applicants in the emerging category can submit fewer samples).

4. Abstract of Ideas

[] **Legal theorists/thinkers:** Submit a short written abstract about the idea(s) that they want to explore. This could include areas of Indigenous laws, or areas within Canadian law as it relates to Indigenous People (i.e., quotes from cases, topics, free form ideas).

[] **Artists:** Submit an abstract of interests which indicates which medium you wish to explore (which could be in any of multiple genres: photography, sculpture, painting, playwriting, dance, film, multi-media, digital media, song – we would ensure a mixture of mediums). This abstract should include a description of the idea(s) that you want to explore in the area of Indigenous Laws or the interaction of Canadian law and Indigenous Peoples.

[You can include the description of the ideas that you want to explore here, or in a separate document. **They should be no more than one page, and 500 words**]

5. **Curriculum Vitae:** Provide a copy of your C.V.

Questions (by email only) | Submissions, please forward to:

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