

AN OFFERING AND A PRAYER

VICKI KELLY

BIO:

Vicki Kelly is Anishinaabe/Métis, and an Indigenous Scholar in the Faculty of Education at Simon Fraser University in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada. She works in the areas of Indigenous Education as well as Art, Environmental, Health and Contemplative Education. Her research focuses are: Indigenous knowledges, pedagogies, cultural resurgence, two-eyed seeing, and education for reconciliation.

Vicki is an artist who plays the Native American Flute; she is a visual artist, Eurythmist/ dancer, and writer. She has completed a two-year traditional apprenticeship at the Freda Diesing School of Northwest Coast Art as part of her research

into Indigenous Poiesis as a knowledge practice.

Vicki is a movement therapist and visual art therapist who worked in clinics and hospitals in Europe in general medicine and psychiatry. She has taught in Waldorf Education and worked internationally in Camphill Communities for mentally and physically challenged children and adults. Vicki is deeply interested in Indigenous understandings of Health, Wellness and Healing.

Listen to
An Offering and a Prayer
<https://soundcloud.com/user-235458448/a-prayer-and-an-offering>



*Aaniin, Migizi, Eagle, please receive the humble reaching of my prayer
Like sacred smoke rising from sweetgrass and sage within an abalone shell.
Asking, seeking in my speaking for the grace of Gitchi Manitou, the Great Spirit
Ascending aloft, arching airborne by feathering filaments flying forth on faith
Your splendid wingspan spiraling until my song soars, singing on the wafting winds
Only to be released, set free as offering before the colourful countenance of Creation.*

Boozhoo, Aaniin, in Anishinaabemowin the word *Aaniin* is our greeting, acknowledging we are meeting within an ancient sounding multiverse and recognizing that we are on similar learning pathways, journeying to be the best at being human and serving 'All Our Relations.'

I humbly offer this songful prayer as a way of welcome and as an act of reciprocal recognition for the diverse ecologies of place and being gathered here. I raise my hands to you and your lands. It is also an acknowledgment that the sacred space created within this special edition is in service of our collective 'lifting up' and 'honouring of' what it means to be human and a good relative to 'All Our Relations.' I wish to sing and resound with the spirit of our intent to reveal and heal through the embodiment of artistic, contemplative and scholarly practice. I wish to offer up a song that humbly honours what I have witnessed during our gatherings, through the reaching of our learning spirits and the voicing of our strong scholarship forged with courage and fashioned by love. Our creations do indeed offer an alternative acoustic ecology, wholehearted and full-throated singing; they resonate with the polyphonic voicing of Creation. Finally, I wish to celebrate the communal conviction collected here, that rejoices in reverence for life and humbly offers hope.

Chi Miigwech.¹



Notes

¹Notes on the two visual images, “Renditions of Traditional Bentwood Box Designs.” These two Heiltsuk or Haisla Bentwood Box Panels c. 1850-1870 were artistically rendered during my two year apprenticeship in Northwest Coast Art. The apprenticeship process invited us to recreate the work of our master carver instructors or the work of an ancient master artist. It was by following in the footsteps of the artist, through the pedagogy of making and deep contemplative observation, that we learned how to form and fashion from the teachings of our Ancestors. As Dempsey Bob so often told us, we are lifting the culture through the art. As apprentices, we were studying the work of masters and ancestors in order to create and become Indigenous artists. It is a journey of transformation wrought from Indigenous participatory pedagogy and embodied transfiguration.

Two Studies: 42 x 72cm Acrylic on Water colour paper March 2015, Vicki Kelly

