



FIRST MEETINGS PHOTO & ART PROJECT

WHAT IS THIS PROJECT ABOUT?

What if we could re-create a first meeting between First Nations peoples and the Voyageurs? What did that really look like?

This project includes the research and re-creation of the First Meetings between Alberta's First Nations people and the French Voyageurs along the setting of Edmonton's River Valley. The project will stage a setting where French/European Voyageurs men first meet the Aboriginal peoples in their camps and villages. The idea is to portray the true setting, where Canada's First peoples are seen as healthy, friendly people who helped the first white voyageurs and settlers live on the land. Many ideas and artworks of the "First Meeting" have been portrayed in history as negative, scary and shown in an idealized, romantic light. We would like to create an environment that is closer to the true history of the first meetings, where First Nations peoples are portrayed as healthy, kind and helpful people who shared their resources with men who had been travelling for months and in most cases were starving.

The idea is to create 2 different scenarios in 2 locations in 2015 along Edmonton's river valley throughout the year, for a minimum of 24 hours for each photo shoot location. Artists and Community members can participate by:

- Bringing artifacts, clothing, etc. for the staged photo sessions
- Participating as actors/actresses within the photo shoots
- Participating in workshops, events, openings and exhibitions at La Cite and Galerie Cite
- Taking photos of the scenes and exhibiting at La Cite and Galerie Cite
- Participating in *What is your story?* booth – tell your story about how you have found yourself living in Edmonton (recordings will be played in La Cite with Community Exhibitions).

FIRST MEETING PROJECT OUTCOMES

- To engage, inspire and educate Edmonton participants and the River Valley Communities in dialogue about local history of the Canada's First peoples, voyageurs and their first meetings, collective memory, and the significance of the past for community development through contemporary visual art workshops/photo shoots, education, events and exhibitions based on research of historical documents, narratives and images.
- Development of a neighborhood dialogue reflecting on how history is present in how we live in an urban neighborhood today, as well as how it affects contemporary and traditional art practices and thought.
- Deliver high quality arts programming, designed and taught by professional artists offering a contemporary twist where Artists/Community are invited to participate.
- A celebration of Canada's 150th anniversary and recognition Edmonton's year of reconciliation.

Lead Artists: Aaron Paquette, Dawn Marie Marchand, Dawn Saunders Dahl with partners Christine Frederick, Jaret Sinclair Gibson, Daniel Cournoyer and Bonnie Doon Community League

For More information Join Our Facebook page: www.facebook.com/firstmeetings

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