

## A Process for CREATING INTERCULTURAL ENGAGEMENT IN A PUBLIC SPACE THROUGH RITUAL AND/OR ARTISTIC EXPRESSION

### Why now?

The human family is deeply longing for belonging and meaningful connections that affect well-being. Elements of Canadian Society continue to undermine such longing through predominant discourse of privilege, power and individual rights. The history of Christianity in Canada is often associated with this predominant discourse. Therefore the Christian prophetic voice has been largely marginalized in this moment of history.



Intercultural conversations that are best embodied through sharing circles which solicit personal stories to ground and invite growing relationships. These relationships discover differences and commonness in the roots of humanity. All expressions rising from these relationships will then allow another discourse to emerge in our society. This alternative discourse will generate a movement of hope into a celebration of differences within a common good and which add critical value to life.

In this project, embracing rituals, utilizing the 6 senses of discovery and/or nurturing expression through creative arts become the agents of change in this movement of hope.

Program developed by Min-Goo Kang, Nicole Andre, Susie McPherson Derendy, Tiina Cote at "Engaging Others! Facilitators Training" December 2016.

Images from "Life + Art Sharing Circle" Winnipeg, Winter 2017.

Hosted by Min-Goo Kang (Ft. Gary United Church) and Maria Epp (Jonah Community Projects)

**2017 Canadian Churches' Forum for Global Ministries [www.ccforum.ca](http://www.ccforum.ca)**  
([director@ccforum.ca](mailto:director@ccforum.ca) for permission to copy or use)

## To Begin:

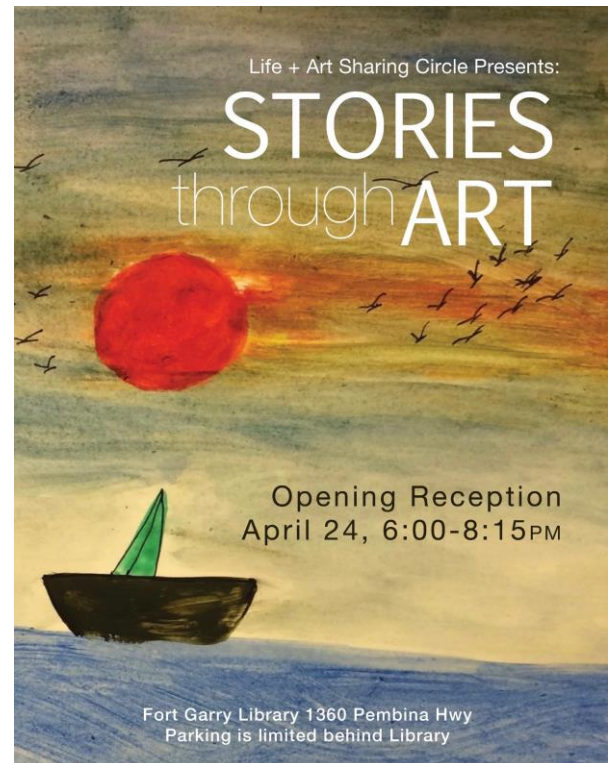
### 1) Decide what you want to be the impact of your time together in a sharing circle.

In our discussions, one person wished to create and deepen community through the association of senses with stories of meaning in their lives. The objective would be to create a connection/memory to other people in the circle every time they smelled or tasted something that had a story behind it.

Another person wished to create a circle of people whose stories would nurture some form of artistic response which then could be shared with a large group in the public sphere and solicit further engagement of cultural difference as adding value to life.

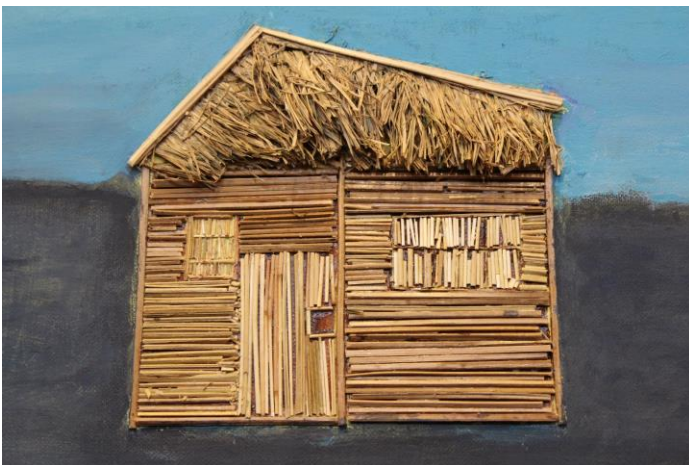
A third person wished to strengthen an ongoing circle of engagement with youth from diverse cultures.

A fourth person wished to develop a Spirituality & Arts process for Intercultural



## Engagement

**2) Imagine the process that you wish the participants to engage with in the sharing circle.** Will you use a particular ritual; will you engage senses in a particular way, perhaps focusing on one sense every time the group met? Would you give time in every group gathering for the discovery of the artistic interpretation?



**Molly Maharaj**  
*My Home, 2017*  
Acrylic and Mixed Media

Imagining the process to get you to the desired outcome, will help you focus on the people you may need to help you with the following steps. To do this, talk about your idea with others. See if they understand what your aim is and how you imagine getting there. Listen to their questions as they may seek clarification. Discern if you need to adjust your aims or process or language that you use. Keep clarifying these elements as you continue to test out your idea with others. Putting effort into this step of the HOW? is worth the time and energy!

Program developed by Min-Goo Kang, Nicole Andre, Susie McPherson Derendy, Tiina Cote at "Engaging Others! Facilitators Training" December 2016.

Images from "Life + Art Sharing Circle" Winnipeg, Winter 2017.

Hosted by Min-Goo Kang (Ft. Gary United Church) and Maria Epp (Jonah Community Projects)

**2017 Canadian Churches' Forum for Global Ministries [www.ccforum.ca](http://www.ccforum.ca)**  
([director@ccforum.ca](mailto:director@ccforum.ca) for permission to copy or use)





**Barbara Douglas**  
*Decisions, 2017*  
 Acrylic on Canvas

**3) Now that you are clear about where you want to go and how you will get there, name the Project in a clear, concise and soliciting way.**

**4) It is time to recruit some partners, collaborators to develop the project towards the engagement phase.** Once you have formed this team, begin with the process you designed for the ultimate sharing circle. Build the team as a sharing circle. Solicit stories in the ways that you imagined in your project. Talk about the need for such intercultural engagement in the ways that motivated you to start this whole project. Use the rituals or the senses or the artistic stimulations that you have imagined for ultimate sharing circle. Having such an experiential process with the collaborators allows for reflection of the process itself. Did the embodiment of the ritual have the effect you imagined? Did the collaborators deepen their understanding and find themselves able to celebrate difference as vital for the value of life?

**5) By living into the process at the beginning of the planning, the project becomes owned by a team and not just you.** By incorporating the parts of the process of engagement that you first visualized, the team can now modified that process based on their own experiences in order to maximize the impact the team wishes to see. Now the team is ready to also understand the nature of the facilitation that will be required to lead the engagement groups into an Intercultural space for the purposes of the project. Knowing more specifically that skills and knowledge required for such facilitation, the team can begin to recruit such facilitator(s).



**Cynthia Dietz**  
*Winnipeg Your Voices!, 2017*  
 Graphic Print

**6) Developing the Implementation Plan with the team.** With a common clarity of purpose and process, the other elements of project planning are developed by the team;

a) **Who** needs to be in the sharing circle? What component of the group might they represent? What voice will they bring that adds to the sharing circle on Intercultural Understanding? Be specific taking into account your particular context and the viability of networks through your team members and potential facilitators. Make special notation also of the general availability of the voices you desire. Are they unlikely to be available during daytime working hours or certain days of the week?

Program developed by Min-Goo Kang, Nicole Andre, Susie McPherson Derendy, Tiina Cote at "Engaging Others! Facilitators Training" December 2016.  
 Images from "Life + Art Sharing Circle" Winnipeg, Winter 2017.

Hosted by Min-Goo Kang (Ft. Gary United Church) and Maria Epp (Jonah Community Projects)

**2017 Canadian Churches' Forum for Global Ministries [www.ccforum.ca](http://www.ccforum.ca)**  
 (director@ccforum.ca for permission to copy or use)



**Sandy Shwetz**

*The Sharing Circle, 2017*

Acrylic and fabric on canvas

b) What will be the frequency of the process?

The project that would use the 6 senses to develop a connection to stories is visualized as an ongoing process bi-weekly process for several months.

On the other hand, the project that visualizes an exhibit of the interpretive art from the sharing circle requires an irregular pattern of gathering; perhaps a weekly process to develop the circle with an period of creative work and then a re-forming of the circle to share. The art interpretations would then be showcased over a period of time so that conversation can be broadened in the public sphere.

c) **Where** would be the best space for such a sharing circle? Where it is held will say something immediately about the inclusivity and safety of the

process. If the team is unaware of the reputation of the space you are considering, consult with others. What other activities in the space might distract your participants? Will you be able to book the space for the frequency you desire? Can you afford the space?

- d) As soon as the frequency has been determined, decide on the necessary dates and confirm the availability of the space. **(When)**
- e) Begin to determine a budget if necessary. Determine if there will be any associated costs to the participants.
- f) With space, dates and costs determined, design your methods of advertising and the necessary forms of advertising. Allow 4-6 weeks between the launch of the advertising and the start of the gathering circle.
- g) Begin active recruitment of the voices as determined earlier. Utilize the team and their networks for intentional awareness building and general invitations. They will be effective advertisers since they will be able to speak from their initial experiences in forming the team of collaborators. Build awareness in the space that you will use if possible.
- h) Review and change elements of the process of engagement as initially planned based on the responses received during awareness building, advertising, and recruitment. Prepare a checklist for any supplies, technical equipment, storage needs.
- i) Prepare any material that might be needed for the participants. Prepare an initial feedback process. **(What)**





**Min-Goo Kang**  
*Stay Connected, 2017*  
 Collage

j) Meet with the facilitator(s) and review the project – intent of outcomes, process and the materials prepared. Adjust any matters based on the facilitator(s)’ needs. Focus on supporting the skills required in facilitating deep and sensitive sharing circles. Keep the facilitator up-to-date on the people who indicate a desire to participate in the project so that they are better able to shape their engagement.

**(How)**

k) About one week before the start of the program, check in with the participants as to their hopes and expectations and any special needs. This will also help confirm their participation and any last minute changes that might be needed to optimize the first gathering.

l) Finalize the feedback process. Adapt as necessary from any details emerging from the facilitator, the space and/or the participants.

m) Just before the launch of the project, gather the team and facilitator(s). Use this gathering time to strengthen this community further. Perhaps allow time for each person to share of a moment of struggle and a moment of joy that were experienced through the planning process. Aim to bring their hopes for the project to the surface. Use prayers and/or rituals and/or other means to strengthen the team for the unfolding before them.

## 7) **START and ENJOY THE JOURNEY TOWARDS INTERCULTURAL ENGAGEMENT IN THE PUBLIC SPACE**

Program developed by Min-Goo Kang, Nicole Andre, Susie McPherson Derendy, Tiina Cote at “Engaging Others! Facilitators Training” December 2016.

Images from “Life + Art Sharing Circle” Winnipeg, Winter 2017.

Hosted by Min-Goo Kang (Ft. Gary United Church) and Maria Epp (Jonah Community Projects)

**2017 Canadian Churches’ Forum for Global Ministries [www.ccforum.ca](http://www.ccforum.ca)**  
 (director@ccforum.ca for permission to copy or use)

# Pembina Neighbours

## Building Community through Storytelling and Arts

### Background:

There is a growing sense of isolation in our community in South Winnipeg. Aging population, language barriers, lack of resources and though it has a good transportation system, the geographical distance in South End contributes to this problem. When people suffer from isolation, it can also cause them not to engage in overcoming it. As a result, a sense of belonging is decreased, interactions between neighbours are rare, and the feeling of supportive neighbourhood is disappearing. We must work together to build the wellbeing of individuals and of the community.

### How:

We propose to host/ facilitate 8 weeks of gatherings – 4 weeks of sharing circle and 4 weeks of making art in Public Libraries (Fort Garry and Pembina Trail). Public Libraries are accessible, and they provide a safe environment. Sharing circle will be a model for communication to honour the indigenous spirituality and culture. Such a model will also ensure that everyone can participate fully and freely. We want to be intentional about the balance of participants' backgrounds: indigenous and non-indigenous including recent immigrants, as well as people from the wider community and people from faith communities. The ideal number of the group would be 12 to 15. Topics of talking circle can vary such as identity, journey, struggle, isolation, joy, family, home, etc. Participants will choose ways of making art as well as themes of their art. After making art, we want to exhibit this in the Libraries as a way to continue our conversations with public.

### Dates and places

- Sharing Circle:

Mondays 6:00 – 8:30 p.m. February 13, 27,  
March 6, 13, 2017 at Fort Garry Library

- Making Arts:

Mondays 6:00 – 8:30 p.m. March 20, 27,  
April 3, 10 at Pembina Trail Library

### Facilitators:

- Sharing Circle: Min-Goo Kang, minister at Fort Garry United Church
- Making Art: Maria Epp, Art Facilitator at Jonah Community Projects

### Partners:

Fort Garry Library

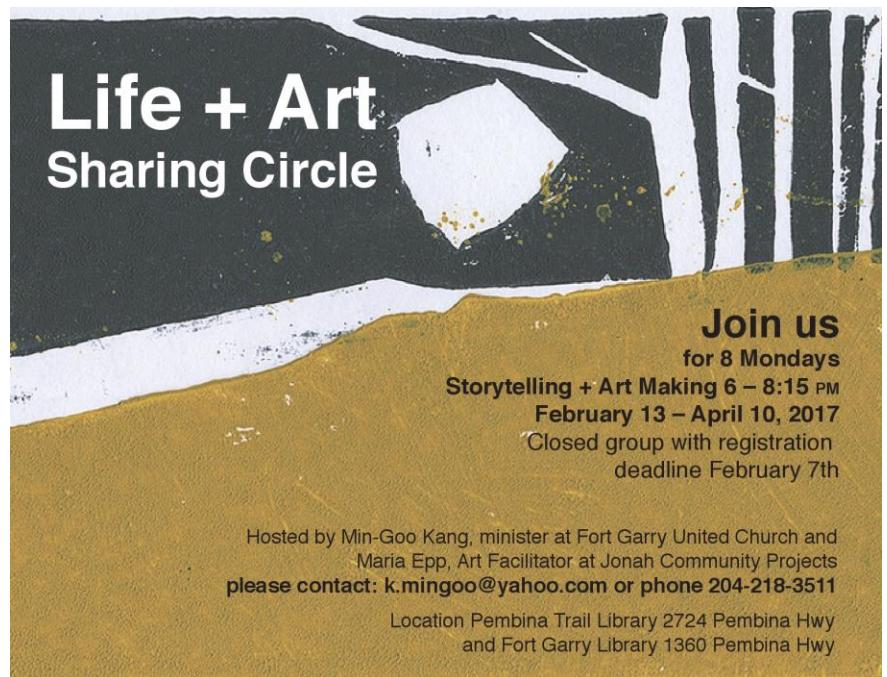
Pembina Trail Library

Fort Garry United Church

Fort Garry Community Network

Meet Me At the Bell Tower – South End

The Jonah Community Projects (A sharing circle and making art projects for Indigenous and Non-Indigenous women in North End)



Program developed by Min-Goo Kang, Nicole Andre, Susie McPherson Derendy, Tiina Cote at "Engaging Others! Facilitators Training" December 2016.

Images from "Life + Art Sharing Circle" Winnipeg, Winter 2017.

Hosted by Min-Goo Kang (Ft. Garry United Church) and Maria Epp (Jonah Community Projects)

2017 Canadian Churches' Forum for Global Ministries [www.ccforum.ca](http://www.ccforum.ca)  
([director@ccforum.ca](mailto:director@ccforum.ca) for permission to copy or use)



**Cynthia Dietz**

*Winnipeg Your Voices!, 2017*  
Graphic Print

My art is my best, short effort to create a two-page comic art piece designed to show a focus of my heart. As completed, it tells me that I have a long way to go to promote peace, and to engage people in community. I felt very challenged to reduce my thoughts to bubbles, needing all along to work on the elements of the “story”: the characters, the setting, the plot, the stakes (or risks), and the ending. Creating the story and art was totally engaging and fun for me. It was a huge change of pace that helped me see things in different ways.

-----

*Cynthia is the GIS Environmental Studies Librarian at the University of Manitoba. She is an organizer of South End Bell Tower, secretary of Crescent Park Rescue, and organizes Bible studies from time to time. In response to the need for reconciliation, she has been promoting the concept of a graphic novel anthology of 1-2 page contributions by youth in Winnipeg: “Healing Ways”. Youth would create the story, and graphic artists would be hired to do the graphics.*



**Molly Maharaj**

*My Home, 2017*  
Acrylic and Mixed Media

Home of 1950 Island of Trinidad and Tobago after Indentured Labourers were free to build their own homes. Built on a hill surrounded by cocoa and coffee plantation, fruit trees, and coconut trees. Labourers who could not afford to purchase material to construct a house would build their house from forest materials. Trees were cut down and trunks were used for siding and windows. Roof was thatched using palm leaves. While constructing this art project it brought back childhood memories of fishing, hunting, picking cocoa and coffee and swimming in the rivers.

-----

*Profession - Correctional Officer*



**Barbara Douglas**

*Decisions, 2017*  
Acrylic on Canvas

Pembina Highway, in Winnipeg has 22 traffic intersections between Confusion Corner and the Perimeter. These symbolize the varying speed, intensity and momentum of our lives dictated by the acceleration and slowing of our 60 km/hr journeys. Let us carefully consider our decisions at life's intersections.

-----

*B. Douglas is a longtime resident of Fort Garry who enjoys reading and art making.*





**Min-Goo Kang**  
*Stay Connected, 2017*  
Collage

*Instructions: Pray or meditate as you walk with your finger*

In the labyrinth everywhere is connected and intertwined. The goal is not to reach the finish line, but to stay on the trail, savoring every moment and listening to our hearts. I used images that are meaningful to me: a picture of my ancestors, my late brother, a lone hiker, trees, birds and animals. I put mantras that help me stay connected: "Breathe easy", "One step at a time", "It all begins here", and "The journey is home" The process of creating a labyrinth led me to reverence others' journeys. We must help each other to stay on the trail. This connection is a gift I received from Life + Art Sharing Circle. And that's what makes the map of Winnipeg alive.

-----  
*Having moved many times in my life, including the recent move from the West Coast to Winnipeg, I have learned to appreciate how each place expresses its own beauty differently. I am grateful to call Manitoba my new home. It is here that I learn how the land provides everything we need: food, shelter and community. The land is alive, ever loving and ever evolving. I've never felt a sense of place like here before. Taking the meaning of Manitoba, where the Great Spirit sits, seriously, I enjoy making new connections through the Spirit in each of us, no matter how different we may look.*



**Sandy Shwetz**  
*The Sharing Circle, 2017*  
Acrylic and fabric on canvas

I have always believed in the saying that we have something to learn from everyone. As I listened during each sharing circle, as each person was given the opportunity to speak, I was imprinted with the stories, wisdom and words of others. **The image of blending and connections emerged.** The sharing was always calm and focused, but the energy was charged and enlightened. There was a spirit of goodness (I refer to as God) present. The circle was an occasion to talk about something meaningful and consider various issues from different perspectives; to expand my own views, and/or clarify my views.

As one person in the circle expressed, 'We are all wanting the same thing.' That truth, along with the spirit of goodness and love within each one of us, are ties that join us together. Because of this, we are never actually strangers with anyone.

'Broadening' was the single word I chose to reflect the whole experience; broadening of understanding, thoughts, community, and 'self'. Please look at the piece through your eyes, then, feel free to look through the 'eyes' of others.

-----  
*Sandy Shwetz was born and raised in Winnipeg. She studied and lived in Montreal and abroad but returned in her late twenties to her favorite place (Manitoba). She spends six months of the year running an ice cream parlour at Clear Lake, Riding Mountain National Park, and six months doing 'something else'.*

Program developed by Min-Goo Kang, Nicole Andre, Susie McPherson Derendy, Tiina Cote at "Engaging Others! Facilitators Training" December 2016.

Images from "Life + Art Sharing Circle" Winnipeg, Winter 2017.

Hosted by Min-Goo Kang (Ft. Gary United Church) and Maria Epp (Jonah Community Projects)

2017 Canadian Churches' Forum for Global Ministries [www.ccforum.ca](http://www.ccforum.ca)  
([director@ccforum.ca](mailto:director@ccforum.ca) for permission to copy or use)