



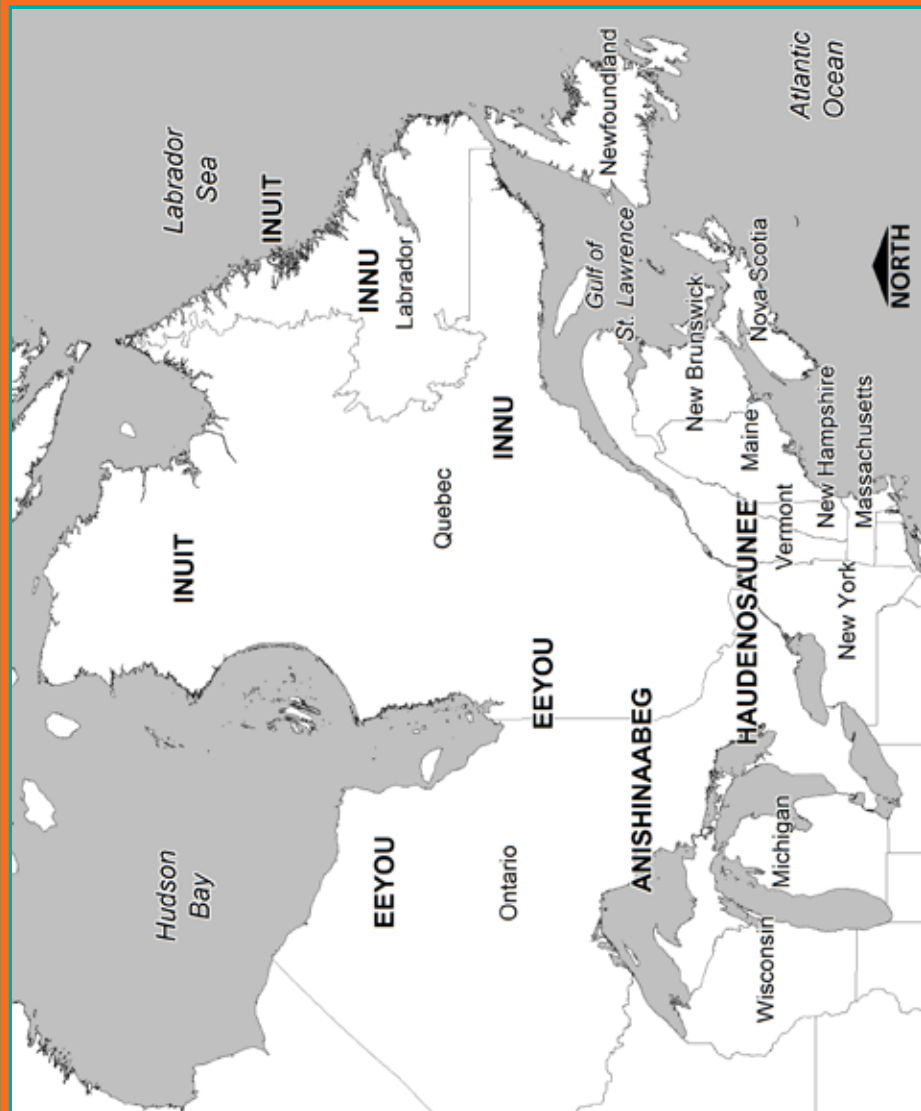
Benedict (Kauitentakust) Michel

Ben was born in 1953 to Shimun Michel and Mani-An Michel, the fourth of twelve children. He was the first student to leave Sheshatshiu to attend high school in Wabush. In 1969, he made a photo essay expressing his concerns about the Innu.

In the ensuing thirty years Michel was an advocate for Innu rights. He negotiated for comprehensive land rights and took part in many protests, including those supporting eviction of mining companies who were exploiting Innu lands without permission or even negotiation.

In 2004 he was elected president of the Innu nation. Although his English skills were effective in dealing with industry and government officials, he remained fluent in his native Innu tongue.

In 2005 he said, “I don’t want to take anything away from anyone who has this dream of a transmission line going from the island portion of Labrador to the mainland so they can sell the power to the eastern seaboard of the United States. I don’t want to take that away from them, but my goodness, they are going to have to do it over my dead body.”



Dear Editor,

Regarding the Muskrat Falls hydro-development; if this was good for the people then it would be okay to say, “Yes, go ahead with it!” But there are so many things that aren’t good for all people. Why is the government pushing so hard to get it going when everyone knows it’s not good for the people? The population is going to grow; are we prepared for that? What will happen to our young people?

If these questions were answered people would feel better about supporting the dam, because it would be good for the people.

I understand people want jobs. I understand people need money to buy food, things for their children and to pay the bills, but I’m concerned that the land and the river will be over-damaged. It is a very high price to pay and there’s no going back once it’s done. We need to be very sure we’ve thought through all these things. Are you sure this is good for all people?

Sincerely, Elizabeth Penashue



Elizabeth (Tshaukuesh) Penashue

I am an Innu woman living in Sheshatshiu, Labrador. For many years I have committed my life to protecting the environment for my children and grandchildren. For over 13 years I have led a canoe trip and spring snowshoe walk for my people. Even when it’s hard, I go. Nothing stops me because “nutshimit” (the bush/country) is very important for our culture. Before I’m gone I want to see some change, I want to help my people and teach the children. I don’t want to see my children lose everything—I know we can’t go back to how things were, but I don’t want them to lose their Innu identity, culture, and life.

Resources

Innu Nation <http://www.innu.ca/>

Ben Michel on the Lower Churchill <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rVu1Bd3lhgo&feature=relmfu>
Hunters and Bombers. Princeton, N.J: Films for the Humanities & Sciences, 1991.
<http://www.onf-nfb.gc.ca/eng/collection/film/?id=18457>

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Ntesinan Nteshinimian Nteniunan: Between a Rock and a Hard Place. Sheshatshiu, Nitassinan:
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Samson, Colin. *A Way of Life That Does Not Exist: Canada and the Extinguishment of the Innu*.
 London: Verso, 2003.

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QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

Elizabeth was born in a tent and lived a nomadic early life with her family, hunting and gathering throughout the Labrador countryside that the Innu call "Nitassinan." How might her observations of the ways in which the next generation assimilates and adapts impact her beliefs about Innu culture and its future? How are some of these ideas and visions for the future expressed in the photographic banners hanging around the Phillips Academy campus?

In 2008, Newfoundland and Labrador Premier Danny Williams negotiated a deal with Innu to permit construction of a hydroelectric megaproject on the Lower Churchill River in Labrador. Many Innu, including Elizabeth are protesting the agreement. How might this project impact the lives of the Innu? What might the potential benefits and/or costs be? In what ways might this type of construction impact your life if it occurred in your community?

Can you think of any global communities past or present who might share Elizabeth Penashue's concerns about cultural change and assimilation for their own people?

What dreams do you have for your own family? What steps could you take to ensure they are realized?



Sam (Meshkana) Rich

Sam Rich Meshkana (meaning “trail” in Innu) was an Innu shaman. John (Kaniuekutat) Poker, an Innu hunter, described Meshkana as very powerful when he was young but “when he was old, he didn’t have much power left.”

According to Kaniuekutat, “Meshkana tried to use his spiritual power to fight against white people, but without succeeding, neither against the settlers nor Father Joseph Cyr, the priest. Father Cyr told the people that he dreamt that Meshkana came to his house. He immediately knew that Meshkana was against him and he told the Innu people that Meshkana was an evil man, but he could not kill a priest; he had no power to do such a thing. The priest talked to Meshkana in a dream and said, ‘You are welcome here. But your job is not to be against the priest.’”

Kanieukutat believed Meshkana to be responsible for his mother’s death. “I didn’t say anything to Meshkana but I knew that one day I would make my move. Meshkana played checkers all the time. I went to visit him and he asked me to play with him. We played checkers for almost the whole day. I thought about what he’d done to my mother and I got angry and concentrated hard, so he never beat me in checkers. I was angry with him, and said to myself ‘I wish you were dead.’ That night I dreamt about Meshkana and the next day he died. I told the people about my dream and I said, ‘Meshkana probably died the way I dreamt about him last night.’ Maybe I was responsible for his death, I don’t really know. Maybe we were playing checkers, maybe we were playing life and death.”

Innu Timeline

The beginning Wolverine (**Kuekuatsheu**) created the world.

75,000–7,000 years ago During the Wisconsin ice age much of Labrador was covered by ice.

9,000 years ago Northwest Atlantic Ocean circulation patterns create one of the most productive environments in the world.

9,000–7,500 years ago Wisconsin ice age ends forming a tundra and boreal forest in Labrador. Paleo-Indian people follow the retreating glacier into Labrador.

1750–400 years ago Ancestors of today's Innu move into Labrador.

1003 During the first Innu contact with Europeans, nine Innu people encounter Icelandic explorer Thorvald Eriksson, son of Erik the Red, at Lake Melville.

1534 French explorer Jacques Cartier claims the Gaspé Peninsula in the name of France and meets with several Innu in Southern Labrador.

1560–1600 Innu control fur trade on the most important trade route in North America. Highly sought after, their skins and pelts fetch the highest prices in Europe.

1608 The Innu grant the French permission to build a settlement on the present day site of Quebec City.

1609 With French allies, the Innu defeat the Iroquois War Party at Lake Champlain, New York.

1615–1616 A plague reduces the Native American population in eastern Massachusetts from 100,000 to about 5,000.

1629 Disgusted by the French people's uncivilized ways, the Innu lead a group of Englishmen to launch an attack on a French settlement in Quebec City.

1641 Pennacook tribal chief, Cutshamache, sells a parcel of land (including what is now Andover) to settlers. The sale stipulates permission for Roger, a local Pennacook man, to plant his corn and take alewives from the brook. A small brook, named in his honor, still meanders its way through the eastern part of Andover.

1743 French merchant Louis Fornel sets up a trading post on what would become a major travel route for the inland fur industry, establishing first European contact with Sheshatshiu.

1769 Cugnot Steam Trolley, the progenitor of the modern automobile, is invented.

1778 Samuel Phillips, Jr., the grandson of the first minister of South Parish of Andover, convinces his father and uncles to supply the funds for a new school for boys.

1816 The first partially successful photograph is made by French inventor Nicéphore Niépce using a camera obscura.

1836 The Hudson's Bay Company founds its own trading post at nearby North West River, across the river from Sheshatshiu.

1867 The first Roman Catholic missionaries arrive in Sheshatshiu.

1894 Geologist A.P. Lowe explores central Labrador with an Innu guide and discovers a huge iron ore deposit in western Labrador.

1915 British missionary Sir Wilfred Grenfell establishes hospital in North West River.

1941 The largest American air force base on the eastern coast is constructed in Goose Bay, Labrador.

1957 A Catholic church is built in Sheshatshiu.

1957–67 The Newfoundland Provincial government strongly encourages the Innu to settle in Sheshatshiu, offering houses, schools, and jobs in return for ending their seasonal hunting expeditions. Deeming their nomadic way of life incompatible with industrialization, the government implements one of the most aggressive assimilation policies ever towards the indigenous people of North America.

1960s and 70s The "Scoop" occurs; Innu children are taken away from Sheshatshiu for adoption.

1969 American Neil Armstrong walks on the moon.

1970 The waters of the Churchill River are diverted to the hydroelectric power station at Churchill Falls. This hydroelectric development floods a prime Innu hunting area half the size of Lake Ontario, disrupting watersheds and ecosystems over thousands of square kilometers.

1976 The Innu form the Naskapi Montagnais Indian Association (NMIA) to better protect their rights, lands, and way of life against industrialization and other outside forces.

1978 Innu land claim negotiations begin.

1984–94 Innu protest low level flight training and proposed NATO training center.

1990 The NMIA changes its name to the Innu Nation and today functions as the governing body of the Labrador Innu.

1993 A nickel deposit discovered at Voisey's Bay, Labrador is considered to be one of the most substantial mineral findings in Canada in the last 40 years. Vale Inco, owner of the Voisey's Bay mining development, becomes the second largest mining company in the world.

2002 The Innu Nation wins recognition for its members as status Indians under Canada's 2002 Indian Act.

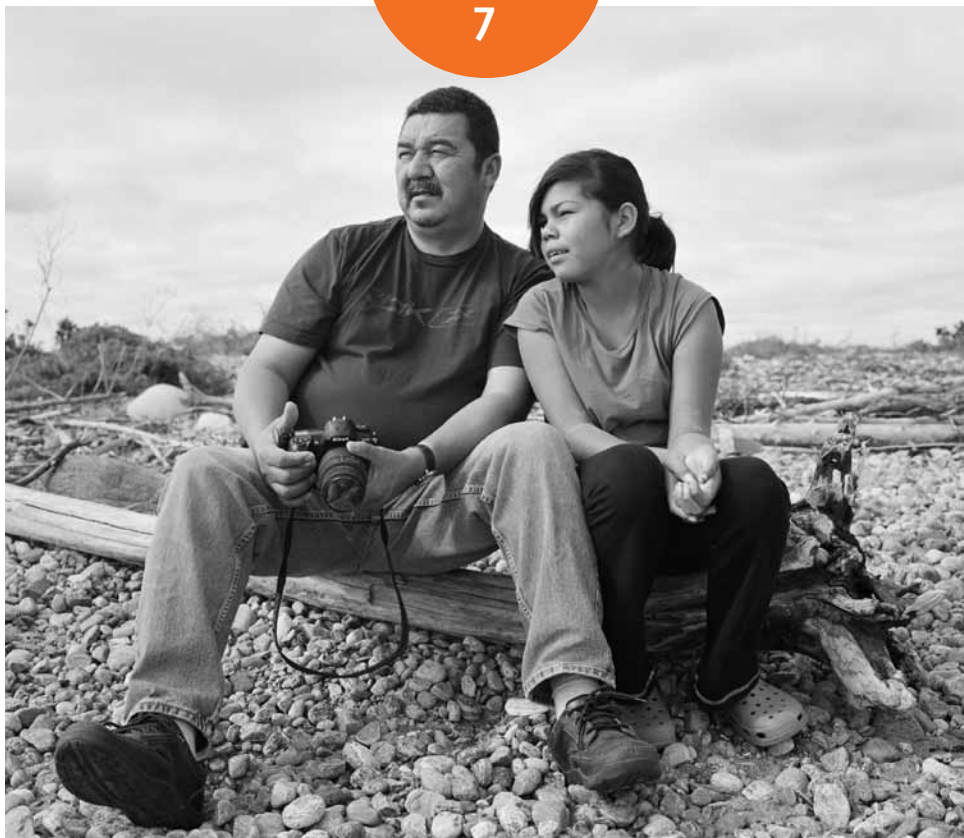
2004 Facebook is launched in Harvard University dorm room.

2006 President of Innu Nation Ben (Kauitentakust) Michel dies suddenly of a heart attack. Daniel Ashini, his successor, pledges to continue Michel's path toward signing a Land Claims Agreement with the Province.

2008 Newfoundland and Labrador Premier Danny Williams strikes a deal with the Innu to permit construction of a hydroelectric megaproject on the Lower Churchill River.

2011 Peter Penashue, son of Frances and Elizabeth Penashue, husband of Mary Ann Penashue, and supporter of an agreement to build a hydroelectric project on the Lower Churchill River, is elected as a member of Parliament in the Conservative Party. Many Innu, including his mother Elizabeth, are protesting the agreement because it will put even more Innu land under water.

2012 Greenpeace gives Vale Inco the "Public Eye People's Choice Award," which identifies them as the world's worst company for their impact on the environment and human rights.



Alex (Nikashant) Andrew

There are lots of bad dreams in the community. Once you are out in the country, it's like you have landed somewhere different. All the problems you have in the community are unloaded. You feel so light.

I think the proudest moment of my life was when we walked on the runway. NATO jets were preparing for low-flying training flights that disturbed the caribou migration. My sister started walking on the tarmac and the planes were ready to go. They turned back when they saw her waving the Innu flag. The planes had to taxi back to their hangars. We put pressure on the Canadian government and actually stopped them from flying.

Alex Nikashant Andrew was one of Wendy's first students in 1969. He's now director of economic development for the Sheshatshiu Innu First Nation Band Council and the author and photographer of *Giant's Dream: A Healing Journey through Nitassinan*. Nikashant wrote this book about the inspiring journey on which his nephew Michel ("Giant") Andrew embarked in the winter of 2009. "Giant" walked 400 kilometres in six weeks across Labrador and raised \$26,000 for diabetes. This was enough to buy a dialysis unit for the hospital in Goose Bay, Labrador.

The Process

“It’s been a long time,” said Greg Andrew when, in 2007, we brought him the pictures he and others had taken in 1969. “A lot of things have happened.”

As we circulated the 1969 pictures in the community, people began to ask us, “Do you have any more old pictures?” While many 19th and early 20th century explorers and anthropologists had photographed the Innu, their photographs are typically housed far away in universities and museums that Innu people have no chance to see. We began discussing the idea of building an archive of Innu photographs with community members.

Together we located as many photographs and films as possible. The films—including a lost 1951 film of the Innu made by Richard Leacock before they were sedentarised—were screened in the community. An Innu Online Picture Archive was also established where people could post their own pictures and comments. In addition we began a photographic project with three Innu High School students—Zak Hajjaoui, Dakotah Free Snow, and Philip Nuna—to create an updated portrait of the community originally depicted in the 1969 photographs.

In 2008, we held an exhibition across the river from Sheshatshiu at the Labrador Interpretation Center (LIC). On display were the 1969 photographs as well as the new pictures taken by Zak, Dakotah, and Philip during the previous year. Each photograph was numbered and ballots were available to viewers. Dozens of people voted for the pictures they wanted to make into banners and the locations where they wanted them hung. The answers ranged from the newly built school to New York City. A laptop and scanner sat in the center of the exhibition where viewers could add their own photographs to our

growing picture archive. Hundreds of Innu people came across the river to see the exhibition and vote for their favorite images. It was the most well-attended Innu event the LIC had ever seen.

Based on the results of the voting, 19 photographs were selected to be made into large vinyl banners. Those images were then circulated throughout the community to enlist conversation about what text to include on the banners. Sometimes one person wrote a passage to go with the image; in other cases, several people conversed about an image and the words included several people’s ideas. Many of these messages dealt with the changes facing Innu people and spoke in contradiction to the ways in which the Innu are portrayed in the media. In August 2009, the banners were installed throughout Sheshatshiu and the nearby town of Goose Bay at the locations that had been chosen by ballot.

Some of these banners, like Alex Andrew’s on the military base or the banner on Goose Bay town hall with the words “The Innu use every part of an animal,” came down a year or so later. Some of the banners continue to hang. On the Sheshatshiu water tower, you can still see Ben Michel’s photograph of his sisters superimposed with Mary Ann Penashue’s drawing. Dakotah’s picture of the serene Grand Lake still whispers from the top of the hockey arena, “Things always change, you have to adapt.” And the banner on Dominic Pokue’s house, that includes a map of his hunting grounds that he drew over a photograph of a landscape, is now partially covered by a pile of chopped wood for the winter. At the top, he posted the antlers of a caribou he killed, a traditional Innu sign of respect for the animal spirits in the landscape.

—WENDY EWALD *and* ERIC GOTTESMAN



Mary Ann Penashue

My name is Mary Ann Penashue. I was born at a place on Mishta-shipu (Churchill River) in 1964, and I spent much of my youth at Mud Lake, near Goose Bay. I was raised by my grandparents, Michel and Mary Pasteen. During the fall months, my grandparents and I lived away from the community in the country where we hunted, fished, and trapped.

I started drawing at a very young age. I always enjoyed looking at different types of paintings. Other people's art would give me ideas for my own work.

My paintings are stories—stories for everyone to see mostly about my Innu way of life, and also I find my paintings bring back a lot of memories. My grandfather was a hunter and my grandmother made stuff for my granddad to go hunting. My grandfather made his own snowshoes and my grandmother made the babish to fill in the snowshoes. And for me it's very important to tell that story. It's what I want my children to see, what I've learned, and what's important. I was inspired by how my grandparents worked hard. I remember when they were living in the tent and coming back here in the community. They were as happy in the community as they were out in the country. I think happiness is important. Putting their story on canvas with colors is a privilege for me.

Resources

Wikipedia http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Innu_people

Innu Aimun <http://www.innu-aimun.ca/>

Richard Leacock's Unfinished Film About the Innu, 1951 <https://vimeo.com/45568439>

Tshikapisk Foundation <http://www.tshikapisk.ca/home/>

Traditional Innu stories <http://www.tipatshimuna.ca>

Peary-MacMillan Arctic Museum, Bowdoin College <http://www.bowdoin.edu/arctic-museum/>

Smithsonian Arctic Studies Center <http://www.mnh.si.edu/arctic/html/Labrador/index.html>

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Leacock, Eleanor B, and Nan A. Rothschild. *Labrador Winter: The Ethnographic Journals of William Duncan Strong, 1927-1928*. Washington, D.C: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1994.

Clarke, Sandra, Marguerite MacKenzie, José Mailhot, Laurel A. Hasler, and Kanani Penashue. *Labrador Innu-Aimun: An Introduction to the Sheshatshiu Dialect*. St. John's, NL: Department of Linguistics, Memorial University of Newfoundland, 2007.

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Burnham, Dorothy K. *To Please the Caribou: Painted Caribou-Skin Coats Worn by the Naskapi, Montagnais, and Cree Hunters of the Quebec-Labrador Peninsula*. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1992.

OTHER RESOURCES

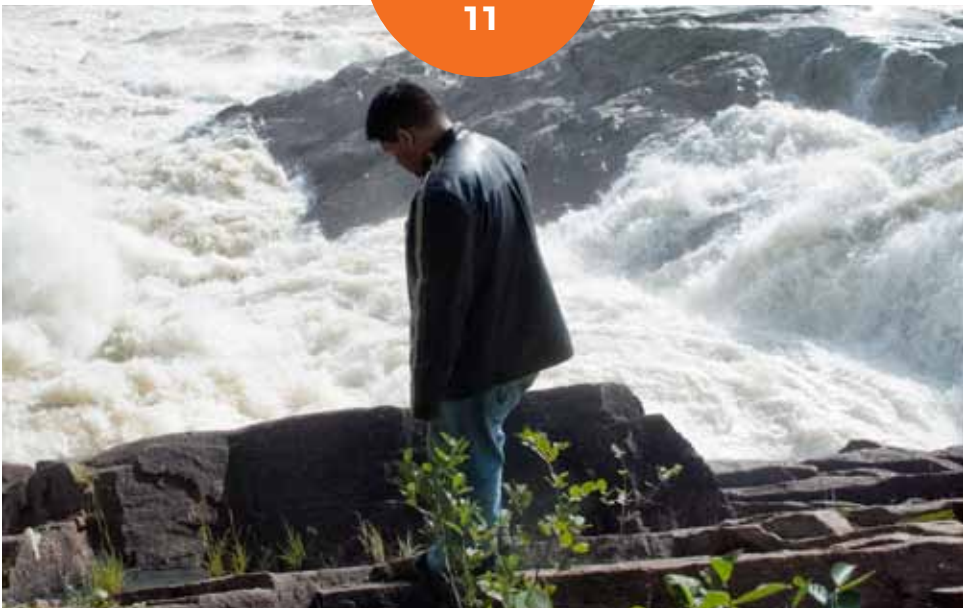
Wôpanâak Language Reclamation Project (reviving the local Algonquian language) <http://wlrp.org/>

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

Mary Ann tells stories through painting. What are some of your traditional family and community stories? In what ways can you think to express or share them? How might the ways in which you would do so differ with your friends, with your family, with someone from your culture or from a different culture, with colleagues? In what medium or mode would you choose to express yourself? Why would this be the most effective way to tell your story?

What language or images do you and your peers share? How would someone from outside your family or community describe you and how is that different from how you would describe yourself?

How do the photographs and words in this exhibition work together to tell a story? Why might someone choose to use paintings or images to tell a story? Why might someone use words?

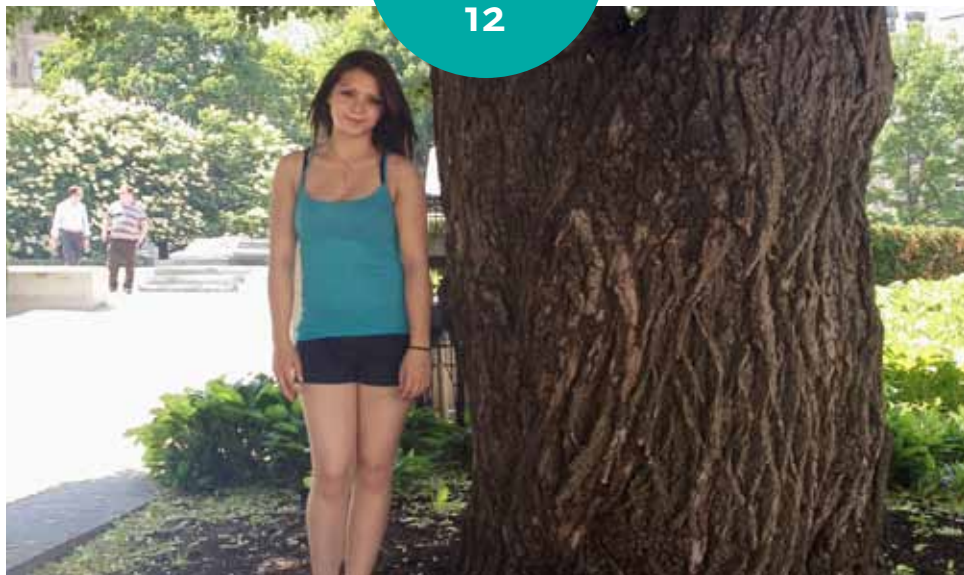


Zak Hajjaoui

The kids forty years ago were more scared than we are today. What we did was take pictures of what tradition means to us. I think, “This is my home, where I live, where I always wanted to be.” To them, the reserve was so new that it wasn’t their home. So I think it was totally different between us.

Kids in the future will probably relate in the same way as me, Dakotah, and Philip because this is our home. Kids in a future Sheshatshiu will accept this place like we do. So their pictures won’t be so different as ours. The biggest difference between our pictures and the ones taken in 1969 that I have noticed is that back then, they were taking more pictures of each other. For them at that time, it was more about sticking together. We took pictures of a lot of landscapes. Today, it is more about fighting for our land and making sure we keep what is ours. So we take pictures of landscapes so our kids can go back to life before the reserve, to the life that Ben Michel and Alex Andrew and their generation used to live, so we can start thinking about our own selves and not worry about anyone else.

Zak Hajjaoui is a child of a child who survived the “stolen generation.” His mother, an Innu baby from Sheshatshiu, was brought at two days old to Georgetown, Ontario, having been adopted without consent from her birth parents. Zak grew up part of his life in Georgetown before finally moving back to the reserve. He was picked on throughout most of his childhood years growing up in Sheshatshiu for his lack of Innu language. Living on the reserve and off the reserve has given him knowledge of both worlds. He does a lot of work with a variety of aboriginal projects and now lives in Toronto.



Dakotah Free Snow

In ten years, I will be out of here and living in another small town. I want to get out and experience the world, what it is like to live away from home, to be on my own, to become more independent. Maybe I'll move somewhere in Ontario. I'll come back here after a few years of being out on my own or just come back to visit family and friends. This is my home. I'll miss this place a little bit, being around friends and family.

It was a big change moving to the city. You have to drive everywhere to get where you want. You have traffic there. There are more people in the schools. I had to make new friends and deal with keeping ones from home. Moving around a lot is kind of tiring, having to drive everywhere especially when you don't have your license.

I want to go to university when I graduate. I think I'm going to go to MUN. Nursing maybe. I want to find another career though, so I have something other than nursing. Then, I'll go to university for it. I want to get married but I think I probably won't. It costs a lot of money, right? The dress, the ring, the food... I wouldn't call it a marriage unless there is a wedding.

I would have a wedding somewhere in a park maybe, somewhere where there is grass. I kind of want to have a family, just don't want to deal with the teenagers, just when they are babies.

Dakotah is an 11th grade student in North West River which is across the river from the reserve in Sheshatshiu, where she lives with her grandmother.



Philip Nuna

I was born November 13, 1995 in St. John's and grew up in Sheshatshiu. My mom was 21 or 22 when she had me.

I like to hang with different people, having different routines. I'm a fast learner. I want to go to a chemistry and physics college. I'm independent, I mean I can do everything on my own. I've seen people who can't do stuff on their own.

I want to be a computer technician, to help people whose computers lag—to fix them. I'm more like a follower than a leader. It's too distressing to be a leader. Some leaders make their jobs really easy when it should be hard.

My grandfather told me not to be afraid of anyone who tried to pick on me. He used to pick on me but just to make me tougher. He wants me to do the things he did when he was young, to be a good part of the family, to be a good cousin, a good friend, never stingy. He looks like a greaser in that picture. I'm becoming wise like him, doing the good things instead of the bad things. He is wise. He is funny. He is not a complainer, only when my grandmother goes to bingo. They have been taking care of me because they love me like my mom loves me.

Philip lives in Sheshatshiu and is in the 11th grade. On the left is a self-portrait made by Philip's grandfather, Patrick Rich, who was one of Wendy Ewald's students in 1969. Philip's photograph is on the right.



Abbot Hall



Elson Art Center



Gelb Lawn



Peabody Museum



Addison Gallery
Homes Library



OWH Library



Paresky Commons (inside)



Borden Gym



Harrison Hockey Rink