

"Music is much more than notes and sounds. For many people, it is a lifeline and a connection to a deeper part of themselves that they could never express in words. It is the dance of the soul and a glorious fountain of joy that resonates from the heart.

Native youth struggle to express their singularly unique experience in life. Their communities have been pushed to the brink by the scourge of the residential school system and the foul stench of xenophobic stereotyping that has left them marked and abandoned in the far reaches of the north.

Isolated, depressed and culturally adrift they search for hope in a dark desolation that threatens to swallow them whole. Music, art and a return to their culture and its glorious history and ancient rhythms provides a lifeline from the dark into the light. As a DAREARTS artist-as-teacher, I have witnessed miraculous transformations and incredible personal growth in composing and performing music with the native youth of the north. The music speaks to them in a voice of connection to their elders with a passion bursting out from deep within them. Shyly converted, their voices ring out with a thousand years of culture and history as they reclaim a legacy that has been stripped away and destroyed. It is triumphant and beautifully majestic.

My soul has never been so stirred as when I sing a song that is pulling together hearts of pain into a chorus of pure joy. It is the voice of the ancients: simple pure and wonderful."

Glenn Marais

Music in Mind

905-751-7238

www.glennmarais.com

www.darearts.com

<http://www.reverbnation.com/theglennmaraisband>

<http://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=855455323>





"I met Evan, the first year I went to Webequie. We were hanging out after school and he picked up my guitar and started playing Metallica, Johnny Cash, riffing out on some solos and just jamming. His playing caught my ear right away. He had a gift and was very precise and clean in his technique. He was very relaxed playing in front of his friends, but as soon as I mentioned how good he was, he retreated and didn't want to play anymore. I didn't run into him during my second year, but this year, he was again part of the program. When I work with the kids we first choose a theme, which this year was pride and then we work in small groups writing down conversations on the topic of pride and what it means to them. The teachers and I prompt them if they get stuck and encourage them constantly to keep the conversation moving and ideas flowing. One of the teachers, Romeo Fournier, came up with the idea of giving them post it notes to write down their thoughts and stick them on a larger piece of paper. Very soon we had a lot of great lyrics to work with. I then worked in the evening with a very talented multidiscipline artist, Krystal Shewaybeck on editing the lyrics into a structured form. The next day, I presented the lyrics to Evan and explained the next process in the writing of the song. What I do at this point, is to let the lyrics dictate the melody and chords, by really delving deep into the meaning of the words and placing yourself almost in a cocoon around the words. I explained this to him and asked him not to play anything

that he normally would avoid his "go to riffs and chords". In fifteen minutes, he had written the chords and riff that became the driving melody and chord pattern for the verses and really identified the mood and feel of the song. He not only understood the process, he took it to another level, creating his own chord and a picked rhythm pattern that was extremely catchy and very unique. He really shined and remained humble and shy throughout. It took a lot of prompting from me to get him to play it to the class. It was interesting in that he would readily play know cover songs, but stepping out and sharing something that he created was very difficult for him. It illustrated to me, that despite his talent and stature as a guitar player in the community, his self-image was still low and not fully realized yet. The song become an anthem and rallying cry for a community that was still mourning the loss of one of it's students. Spirit of the North is power, beauty and all of the challenges of life in the North, in a three minute song. Evan created the magic from the students' words. After the performance of the song to the community, we presented the school with a donated guitar and in minutes it was in Evan's hands and he was beaming like a star. There was no doubt in anyone's minds that the guitar belonged in his hands...."

Glenn Marais

Music in Mind
905-751-7238
www.glenmarais.com
www.darearts.com

<http://www.reverbnation.com/theglenmaraisband>
<http://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=855455323>