



March 17, 2021

Humphrey Trails: Creative Community Happens Here

Whispering River Music's *Creative Communities* project is based on an old storyteller's saying: "When you tell one story, you should always tell two. That way the stories will lean on each other". The first of these, the "Humphrey Nature Trails: Creative Community Happens Here" project, invites families and community members to tell their own stories in response to twelve Covid_19 art installations along Rabbit Run built by the students of Humphrey Public School. Each station has a question about personal response to the pandemic generated by the grade 6 class.

In many ways, communities are comprised of stories that lean on each other to create a shared cultural experience. It is our hope that the practice of leaning stories on each other will begin a "River of Creative Community" through the forest to support us all in difficult times. The students have begun the process with painted "stories" in response to each of the 12 questions. They are now inviting people to paint their stories on cedar shakes or small boards, and to let their stories "lean" on the students' stories to start the river flowing.

Historically humanity has created art to help communities and individuals transcend, persevere and endure. To connect with that tradition, students reviewed the Ice-Age Cave Art near Lascaux, France, where 17,000-year-old paintings by our hardship-ridden ancestors are inspired by the paintings of even earlier artists. The paintings, like stories leaning on each other, are layered and nested into the walls of the cave. Continuing this artistic practice, the students began telling their pandemic stories with paintings - but painting is just one method of storytelling. If you would prefer to post a poem or video of a song in response to one of the questions, you may post on our website, so it can lean on the students' stories in that way.

Perhaps the most compassionate image from the Lascaux Caves is that of multiple outstretched hands, created by generations of artists' painting over their hands to form a silhouette or handprint. Whispering River Music and Humphrey Public School are inviting contributors to sign their story-art pieces with a handprint on the back of their boards. In this way their hands can join hands with the hands painted so long ago, and with those of the students.

We invite you to join hands with us and be part of the River of Creative Community that flows from time immemorial, and is flowing now through Humphrey, on the Humphrey Nature Trails. Please contribute a sign, poem or song video in response to the 12 questions raised by Humphrey Public School Students around the pandemic.

For more information, to post a video or poem, download music to paint to, or arrange for pick up or delivery of sign board materials visit www.whisperingrivermusic.com and click on Contact Us.

Brenda Margaret Muller, Artistic Director, Whispering River Music * 705 996 0736