



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

EP *Moments* captures experiences of Indigenous youth through collaborative music therapy project

Students explore feelings of loss, connectedness, and communal healing with tender collection of five tracks



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Toronto, October 20, 2023 - The EP *Moments* was released today by **Nikamo**, the first artist collective to emerge from the [Naskwahamâtowin music therapy project](#), a collaboration between Kehewin Native Dance Theatre (KNDT) and non-profit Make Music Matter (MMM). The project offers innovative mental health support for Indigenous youth and is supported by Bell Let's Talk and National Music Centre.

Through sharing circles, songwriting, and recording, students were offered a safe space to communicate their feelings and talk about the weight they carry as survivors of intergenerational trauma. Together, they created five songs that paint a picture of resilience, the bonds of friendship, and connection to the land.

[Title track "Moments"](#), "The Best Times", and "Wihcêkaskosîwi-sâkahikanihk" (translated from Cree as "Onion Lake First Nation") talk about love and support from the community. "She Brings Healing" and "Mistatim" dive into traditional storytelling with teachings about the natural world.

Community Elders played an important role in the therapeutic process. “They aren’t scared to sit with the kids at their level. They share stories about subjects that can be difficult to talk about,” explains KNNDT’s Rosa John. She says having an Indigenous-led team deliver the program in First Nations schools helped keep the students at ease.

Lead music producer and celebrated Indigenous artist Cindy Paul says, “As a Cree person myself I felt proud to go into the communities and share my knowledge with the kids. I do think it is important for the youth to see an Indigenous artist in a leadership role. It’s helpful to have existing cultural connections and an understanding of the barriers that they currently face.”

Paul witnessed students coming out of their shell with newfound confidence. “To give the students a platform to express their feelings, create their own narrative, and share their messages in song is a powerful tool and has the ability to bring the community together in a positive way.”

In celebration of their debut release, Nikamo will perform on [October 28 at Studio Bell, home of the National Music Centre](#), in Calgary.

“We’re thrilled to provide a stage for Nikamo to share their music and their healing journey with our visitors,” said Andrew Mosker, President and CEO of National Music Centre. “Creating opportunities for emerging artists to perform and develop their skills is a big part of what we do every day at National Music Centre.”

[Listen now to *Moments*](#), available to stream and download on all major digital platforms.

Moments tracklisting:

1. She Brings Healing - mixed by Carrie Armitage
2. The Best Times - mixed by Marc Meriläinen
3. Moments - mixed by Erman Aydoğan
4. Wîhcêkaskosîwi-sâkahikanihk - mixed by Simon Pressey
5. Mistatim - mixed by Robbie Grunwald

Flute performance by Tony Duncan

Album produced by Cindy Paul

Album mastered by Noah Mintz

Album artwork by Marc Leardi, based on a photo by Melvin John

- Stream/download *Moments*: <https://lnk.to/MMMPMoments>
- [Moments album artwork](#)
- [Moments visualizers](#)
- [Song lyrics](#)
- [Nikamo artist avatar](#)
- [Photos](#) from the *Naskwahamâtowin* Healing in Harmony project

About Nikamo

Nikamo ('Sing' in Cree) is an artist collective featuring Indigenous youth from Kehewin Cree Nation, Goodfish Lake, Onion Lake, Cold Lake, and Saddle Lake in central Alberta, Canada. They were brought together through the *Naskwahamâtowin* Healing in Harmony project and have transformed into empowered and fearless artists. Inspired by their own stories, their families, and community Elders, Nikamo are helping to keep their Indigenous culture alive.

About Kehewin Native Dance Theatre

Kehewin Native Dance Theatre offers community workshops, training, educational resources, and performances that incorporate Indigenous theatre, dance, music, and storytelling. They have dazzled audiences across Canada and worldwide with performances by champion Pow Wow dancers, hoop dancers, breathtaking contemporary dancers, and renowned drummers, singers, and storytellers.

[Website](#) // [Facebook](#)

About Make Music Matter

Make Music Matter uses the creative process as a therapeutic tool to help heal trauma and empower marginalised voices. Its innovative Healing in Harmony music therapy program has helped transform the lives of over 14,000 individuals in eight countries worldwide. Songs created through the program are professionally produced and released globally, serving as advocacy tools to promote human rights and combat stigma. [Website](#) // [Instagram](#) //

[Facebook](#) // [LinkedIn](#) // [Twitter](#)

About National Music Centre | Centre National de Musique

The National Music Centre (NMC) has a mission to amplify the love, sharing, and understanding of music. It is preserving and celebrating Canada's music story inside its home at Studio Bell in the heart of Mohkinstsis (Calgary) on Treaty 7 territory. A registered charity with programs that include exhibitions, artist development, performance, and education, NMC is inspiring a new generation of music lovers. [Website](#) // [Instagram](#) // [Facebook](#) // [TikTok](#) // [LinkedIn](#) // [Twitter](#)

About Bell Let's Talk

The Bell Let's Talk Diversity Fund provides grants for organisations working to reduce the stigma of mental illness and increase access to culturally informed mental health and well-being support for BIPOC communities. Kehewin Native Dance Theatre is a Bell Let's Talk Diversity Fund grant recipient. The grant supports the music therapy program helping Indigenous youth, young adults, and elders write, record, and perform original songs while raising awareness for mental health care.

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