Inclusion and Acculturation

To those who wish to explore or who have already chosen to become part of our community, we offer to you all this statement:

Welcome to you all!

To those who wish to present as your culture, heritage, biological origin, or any other identified group, and to those who don't.

Your heritage, your DNA and your preferences are all part of you, but how - and if - you choose to express those parts of you is your decision.

We, as the leadership and producers of Kindle Arts and Otherworld, want you to know:

You are welcome just as you are.

We will not force individuals or groups to step outside their radical self-expression and create art under the expectation of what others want to see or think we should have.

We will ask of you only the following: bring yourself, share with us what you will and define for yourself what that means.

We look forward to knowing you.

Current policies regarding the general Inclusion and Acculturation mission statement

We will not tell any community what the most correct or rewarding form of self-expression is for their group.

This is a culture of gifting, not of curation or expectation.

Radical self-expression is a gift offered to the community. Each offering is as unique as the individual who offers it.

"Radical self-expression arises from the unique gifts of the individual. No one other than the individual or a collaborating group can determine its content."

- *Burning Man, 10 Principles*

We **are not** here to tell you what to be.

We **are** here to make space and offer support for community members to choose what is right for themselves.

Among many other ideals, the Burning Man community adheres to the following maxims in this link: https://burningman.org/about/10-principles

We **do not advertise** or **solicit** anyone to attend our events or join our membership. Each individual finds us. They choose of their own free will to be here.

We honour and protect that right to choice and free will, not just for people from specific heritage, minority or specially identified communities, but for every person exploring what it is to become a member.

Consent is key in our community.

We will not knowingly ask, coerce, force or imply that ANY individual from ANY recognized group SHOULD make art for our events and initiatives. This is especially true when art is made to meet a perceived expectation or when it or the artist feels they need to be qualified or validated as a member of a recognized group.

In our community, there is no such thing as a piece of art that is not enough. Neither your indigeneity, LGBTQ+ identity, skin colour,country of origin, economic circumstances, neurodiversity, nor disability make you or your expression of art “not good enough” to be considered valuable.

Who can commission specific art and request specific attendance from recognized groups?

Currently this type of solicitation exists in the default world. Groups in positions of leadership and/or people considered to be current landowners CAN express reciprocity and acknowledgement through commission and purchase agreements. Permanently built cities can benefit from commissioning art and offering paid support for engagement opportunities from marginalized groups in this manner as an act of reciprocity. This is because the people and groups who run these cities and areas are currently **recognized as landowners**.

Buying and permanently installing art or supporting culturally significant events and educational opportunities both reclaim land and offer reciprocity (even if in a very small way). These activities create visibility, rally support, raise awareness and acknowledge legitimized presence. It does so in an environment where hard rules about ownership, costly permanent infrastructure, and historic values of diminishment and othering towards people’s differences and uniqueness have long been the norm. Can it be better? Always! Is it the right way for us? Probably not. Or at least not as we currently are now.

So why are we different?

Our path towards acknowledgement and reciprocity must be different for the following reason:

We are not landowners. We are renters and we are guests. We are TEMPORARY neighbours.

Because we are guests and land is not ours to give as guests, we must show gratitude, humility and reciprocity in different ways.

How can I be a good guest?

Above all else: honour the expectations of our hosts.

These are the direct expectations that have been given to us to date.

Please take this to heart: a breach of these direct expectations puts unnecessary stress on the agreements the current landowner has with the members of our Indigenous hosts. It also goes against the direct requests of the local Indigenous community's leadership and puts our whole event at risk.

When it comes to the agreements that are made outside the borders of our community, success by do-ocracy does not apply. This is their traditional territory and home. We will follow their asks, act with humility, listen, honour and uphold their requests without question.

These are the current requests of the Indigenous community of the Cowichan Valley region where our event is currently held.

In the event of a breach the leaders of the Ts'uubaa-asatx First Nation have our direct number and the number to the producer phone line, which is held by a member of the board 24 hours a day, throughout the entirety of our time on that property.

To date we have never been called on that line by them and we intend to do everything within our reasonable power to keep it that way.

All of the following are direct requests made to any renter of the Laketown Ranch site. They are confirmed and supported by the landowners of Laketown Ranch.

Sound Requests

- Do not play music that they can hear in the early morning.
- Do not point our speakers directly at them.

What we are doing:

In the past this request has been violated by our community. For this reason, and specifically since 2023, we have employed a very strict, very detailed sound map that outlines sound decibel expectations, times of day, zones of noise quality and the directions speakers are allowed to face. These maps are visible around the event, posted at every borough and stage. Each stage is given a sound monitoring device. Additionally, we created the position of sound marshal. Our marshals move around the event and monitor sound levels 24 hours a day during the event.

What can you do:

Be sure to take notice of the sound requirements in the What Where When Guide, respect the posted signage, be kind and act with swiftness when engaging with our sound marshals. Monitor yourself and your neighbours with kindness. Looking out for each other and honouring the ears of our Cowichan Lake neighbours goes a long way towards upholding a positive relationship between communities.

Physical Land Requests

- Do not enter their land, do not allow people to camp, display art, perform or wander through their land.

What we are doing:

Greg Adams has marked clear boundaries outlining the property border. We post our maps and signage outlining property borders in the What Where When Guide and on large signs around the property during the event.

What can you do:

Respecting those boundaries is how we show respect and gratitude to our host Indigenous Nation and local Cowichan Valley community.

Motion Requests

- Do not block the highway or cause car traffic to reside on it.

What we are doing:

We do our very best not to block access to their homes or interfere with their businesses by causing roadway congestion.

This is why we have initiated such specific and direct guidelines about arrival timing. The property gates are closed during specific hours to honour and support this request. People are not permitted to park outside the event in any manner that would impede regular traffic flow.

What can you do:

Take care to plan your trip timing and have a back-up plan if you are running late. Have a way to contact your camp and know in advance where your camp is on the property before you arrive. Have your ID, tickets and anything else you are required to show at the gate in order to gain access to site in the fastest, most efficient way possible. This is the best way you can show our hosts that you understand and care about their needs.

How else can we acknowledge and offer reciprocity to them? I want to do more.

Burning Man events can be a great boon for the local communities that host them. Here's how you can contribute:

- Buy local, and support and explore the cultural economy. Engage with buying gifts, products and services that they CHOOSE to bring to their local stores and market spaces. Do not solicit from them what they are not already willingly offering.
- Act respectfully when entering the town site, treat this town as a good friend who has welcomed you over for dinner.
- Be polite.
- Listen.
- Learn.
- Say thank you.
- Be curious.
- Honour the local natural resources. Do not damage, take plants, stones or other objects from the surrounding environments. Leave them alone for everyone to enjoy.
- And of course: Leave no trace

How we acknowledge the local Nation?

We will honour the acknowledgement as they have it written on their website, unless they expressly ask for it to be different.

Acknowledging the Ts'uubaa-asatx Nation

Ts'uubaa-asatx Nation (formerly known as the Lake Cowichan First Nation) have lived around the shores of Cowichan Lake for millennia long prior to the arrival of Euro-Canadians. Ts'uubaa-asatx have always made their primary home on Cowichan Lake. The English translation of the name Ts'uubaa-asatx is "People of the Lake."

https://www.tsuubaaasatx.ca/

Can I make traditional art from my heritage or protected group's background?

Yes! Can I gather a group of individuals with a unified, consensual agreement to create a camp that is focused on sharing and celebrating that heritage or culture? YES!

Can I apply for art, support and transport grants to make it all happen? YES, YES and YES!

https://kindlearts.ca/grants-program/

You are welcome to bring whatever it is in you to share. Consider this self-expression potluck. Bring anything you wish, but keep the following things in mind:

- Do not bring it because you think it is what we want to see.
- Do not bring it because someone else told you to.
- Do not bring it because you were told that your heritage for your identified group was the only thing that made you special or valuable.

This is Otherworld. Your opportunities to express yourself in whatever wild, wonderful, ingenious way you can dream up are YOURS to bring into being.

Your ideas ARE what make you valuable, unique and relevant right now!

You are welcome, just as you are. You are relevant. You are free to create and dream just as you are now, or however you CHOOSE to evolve in the future. Otherworld is your opportunity to explore, embrace and celebrate that understanding. It is a place of freedom to be expressed in whatever way YOU wish.

Where is the line?

Ethical, radical expression comes down to consent.

We all offer our first sign of consent by signing a waiver acknowledging risk in order to attend this event. We do so to acknowledge we understand we are entering an uncurated, unsolidified, possibly untested, brand new, fundamentally experimental, highly concentrated work-in-progress. We exist in an ever evolving zone of creation, and like any zone under continuous construction, unintentional hazards are to be expected.

We are here for radical self-acceptance and radical acceptance of others.

That said, just because we are here to accept one another, it does not mean we all immediately understand or agree with each other. We are unique; we all come with unique perspectives. Some of those perspectives will be similar, and others will be wildly different or even opposing. To celebrate and welcome uniqueness is to celebrate and welcome differences, by definition.

We are here to share, but not to take what is not offered. We believe in enthusiastic consent by both parties. We do not force, coerce, demand or expect someone to take what we offer just because we offered it to them. We are here to grow, experience and discover each other, not to overpower or overwhelm each other.

"The giver should respect the rights and liberties of the recipient."
- *Burning Man, 10 Principles,Radical Self-Expression*

Achieving this in an environment deliberately composed of so much difference requires sensitivity, slowing down, listening, having patience and coming in with an open mind. Being willing to give space to self and others, especially when something newly seen or experienced blows apart the very foundations of what you were absolutely sure was exclusively true before.

Paradigm shifts take time. They come with emotions and an overflow of thoughts, not all of which are immediately welcome or comfortable. Be gentle with yourself and with others. Take time to adapt and contemplate before immediately reacting. This is your opportunity to reconsider old habits and reevaluate beliefs to truly see the world through a fresh and much wider lens than you did before. Take time to honour that, consider suspending disbelief, take a deep breath, take a walk, talk to a friend, nourish yourself, rest, and then revisit. You may be surprised at the new thoughts, feelings and potential you will find. We are all here and we are all in this together, always.

The hard line of what's not allowed:

Forced aggressive, non-consensual engagements, especially those that diminish, marginalize, gaslight or are otherwise insensitive to anyone or anything.

Therefore, art or engagements are not allowed are as follows:

- Forced, aggressive political statements, especially those set out to diminish another group and demand non-consensual agreement.
- Art or engagements that force or coerce sales of products or services, or are intended to drive traffic toward businesses or other commercial initiatives outside of the event.
- Art or engagements that cause obvious, non-consensual, avoidable, aggressive physical, mental or emotional harm.

[You can read more here: https://kindlearts.ca/about-kindlearts/constitution/](https://kindlearts.ca/about-kindlearts/constitution/)

What other habits could I take on in order to have a positive impact as a citizen of a gifting community?

We strive to the best of our ever-evolving understanding to follow the guidelines of the Honourable Harvest.

These are laid out, not exhaustively or extensively, but in a very straightforward manner in the book by Robin Wall Kimmerer called *The Serviceberry - Abundance and Reciprocity in the Natural World.* She is an Indigenous Botanist and Speaker who gifts much of her time to bridging the gaps of communication and knowledge between cultures.

She says:

"Know the ways of the ones who take care of you, so that you can take care of them.

Introduce yourself. Be accountable as the one who comes asking for a life.

Ask permission before taking. Abide by the answer.

Never take the first one. Never take the last.

Take only what you need.

Take only that which is given.

Never take more than half, leave some for others.

Harvest in a way that minimizes harm.

Use it respectfully. Never waste what you have taken.

Share.

Give thanks for what you have been given.

Give a gift in reciprocity for what you have taken.

Sustain the ones who sustain you and the Earth will last forever."

In closing:

We only ask the following…bring yourself, share with us what you will and define for yourself what that means.

And once again: We look forward to knowing you.

Welcome to you all!