

# SN to host Gathering of Indigenous Literary Studies Association

By Lindsay Monture

**SIX NATIONS** - This Thursday a delegation of indigenous literary artists and scholars from across Canada, along with the Six Nations community, will gather for the Arts of Community: Inaugural Gathering of the Indigenous Literary Studies Association at Six Nations Polytechnic.

The 3 day conference will include keynote addresses by Daniel David Moses, Jeanette Armstrong and Joseph Boyden, as well as panels, presentations, social gatherings and tours of the Chiefswood Museum and Woodland Cultural Centre for guests.

"The whole idea is to bring together academics and community to have a dialogue and to set research agendas for the future, like what's most useful for indigenous people, what do community people think about the scholarship that is produced about our people and how our community would like

to see us move forward," says Rick Monture, co-organizer with the ILSA, and Director of Indigenous Studies at McMaster University.

The ILSA was founded in 2013 in the Musqueam territory of Vancouver by Monture and 8 other artists in indigenous literature in Canada. He suggested they host their first conference in Six Nations because of the connection to Pauline Johnson.

"The beginning of indigenous people writing our experience was in her lifetime in the 1800s and she's such a pivotal, intriguing figure not just within our community, but across the country."

Monture says they aimed to step away from university atmospheres to involve more native communities.

"If we're writing and talking about literature about native people, we want to make sure the community is aware and is able to participate in the discussion that revolves

around them and us, so that's why the title of the event is called the art of community."

Daniel David Moses, Six Nations playwright, poet and keynote speaker expressed his excitement for the homecoming event.

"This is a historic event as far as the study of aboriginal literatures goes because it's the first time all those professors and students who study native literature have gathered and focused on literature in Canada. It's people from right across the country, which is very exciting."

Moses was one of the editors for the Oxford Anthology of Native Canadian Literature in English, and an avid supporter of the growing literary arts in Six Nations. He will be sharing his insights as the opening keynote speaker and participant in the roundtable The Publication of Series and Anthologies.

The conference will kick off Thursday evening with a welcome reception, opening keynote address by Daniel David Moses and a social.

Friday will include a keynote address by Jeanette Armstrong called Story: Creating Community, and the roundtables Haudenosaunee Material and Embodied Culture, Theorizing Position Comparatively, Pauline Johnson and Haudenosaunee Traditions, Hip Hop and Spoken Word, Orality, Community, Poetics, Decolonizing the Digital, Kinships and Communities, and Storying Lives. The evening will round off with Authors, Communities, Responsibilities: a Conversation with Joseph Boyden.

Saturday will include the two-part panel

Community Based Scholarship in Practice, The Publication of Series and Anthologies, Respect, Relevance, Reciprocity, Responsibility: Academic Research Acknowledging Unceded Coast Salish Territory, and From Six Nations to Squamish: Building from Here to There.

There will also be tours of the Chiefswood Museum and the Wood-

land Cultural Centre, where a closing dinner will take place with a performance of "The Paddle Song" by Cheri Maracle. "We want to open it up to the community, it's free to drop in anytime," Monture urges. "We want to promote the communication between what academics do and what the community is interested in, and this is just the

place to start."

The Arts of Community is made possible with support by the ILSA, McMaster University, Six Nations Polytechnic, Chiefswood National Historical Site, and the Woodland Cultural Centre. More information can be found at [www.indigenoussliterarystudies.org](http://www.indigenoussliterarystudies.org).