2019 Artist in Residence: Rory Wakemup's Installation

AS PART OF BELWIN'S ARTS, CULTURE AND ECOLOGY PROGRAM, we invited Rory Wakemup to be our 2019 Artist in Residence. His work resulted in the creation of the first sculpture on the land of the Creative Center.

"My mission in life is to use art to help educate folks of all ages and ethnic backgrounds, and to create community bonds," said Rory. "This project is part of my larger effort to help move the dial toward a healthy environment and racial equality."

Rory's "Buckthorn Buffalo" is constructed entirely of buckthorn, an invasive species. The ephemeral work of art is meant to be burned, said Belwin Program Director Susan Haugh. "In this piece are Rory's thoughts and prayers for the resurgence of native species."

Over the next three years, we will pilot different residencies at the Creative Center as we develop our Arts, Culture and Ecology program. Watch for more information!

A student from Anishinabe Academy holds tufts of milkweed pods gathered on the lands at the Creative Center, where a new partnership with the Minneapolis-based school is taking place.

A Convergence of Arts, Culture and Ecology

Last October, attendees of the U.S.-based Alliance of Artists Communities' annual meeting were invited to an all-day workshop at Belwin's Creative Center. Led by Indigenous artists/activists Sharon Day and Rory Wakemup, they engaged in art making focused on water and invasive species. This was followed by a discussion about Belwin's unique Artist in Residence partnership with Anishinabe Academy where Rory is also Artist in Residence and works with the students.

Leaders from Anishinabe Academy, a public, primary school that specializes in Dakota and Ojibwe language and culture, joined Belwin staff to discuss our new and exciting partnership focused on arts, culture and ecology.

"We thought it would be a great experience for people from around the country to learn about a collaboration and partnership that's outside the box," says Susan Haugh, Belwin program director.