

Mîtawîtan (Let's Play)!

***Mîtawîtan (Let's Play)!** is a community engaged project by printmaker and textile artist **Catherine Ruddell**. This project has been developed for **KidzArt Dayz in the Community**, an adaptation of Two Rivers Gallery's annual in-person family event that normally extends outdoors into the Civic Plaza.*

*To participate in **Mîtawîtan (Let's Play)!** you can pick up your free Print Kit developed by Catherine, which includes two Michif language cards describing summer activities, and materials for three different types of handmade stamps. Learn how to make stamps from string, fun-foam, and cardboard, and use the Michif language cards for inspiration. Then, bring two of your unique stamps to the gallery for Catherine to create a community mural in the Rutsad Galleria!*

Be part of Mîtawîtan (Let's Play)!

- **June 9th:** Print Kits will be available for *free* at three locations: Two Rivers Gallery, Huble Homestead, and The Makerie.
- **June 9th - June 29th:** Create three stamps - test one, and save two for Catherine to use in an installation at Two Rivers Gallery. Share your test prints on social media and be sure to tag us so we can share your creations: **@tworiversgallery #KidzArtDaysInTheCommunity**
- **June 29th - July 3rd:** Bring two stamps to the gallery when you are finished. The deadline to bring your stamps to the gallery is July 3rd.
- **July 11th - August 8th:** Come see Catherine's installation of **Mîtawîtan (Let's Play)!** at Two Rivers Gallery between July 11th and August 8th in the Rustad Galleria!

Included in each kit:

- 3 pieces of matboard (stiff cardboard)
- 2 pieces of corrugated cardboard
- Cord or rope
- Foam sheets
- Mini glue
- Index cards with Michif words or summertime activity on them. Use these words as prompts or inspiration for your designs – feel free to think creatively!

What you need from home:

- Pencil, pen or marker for drawing
- Scissors
- Optional: craft paint if you are going to test one of your prints at home.

You will make three stamps today. Pick the Michif word you would like to use as inspiration for your stamps. Will you use only one of the words included in the kit or both?

Following the guidelines below, you will be adding the different layers to that square of matboard and turn it into a printing plate or stamp. Adding each of these layers requires a pencil, scissors, glue and the layering material from your kit.

When you finish making your stamps:

Once you have created each of the three different kinds of stamps, **pick two of them that you would like to return to the gallery.** They will be used by Catherine to make a printed community mural in the gallery.

Use one of your stamps at home. To test out your stamp, you will need some craft paint, and some sheets of paper big enough to print your stamp on. Use a small sponge or cotton ball to dab a thin layer of paint onto your print plate. Lift your stamp and place it paint side down on the piece of paper and press firmly across the cardboard back. Lift your stamp carefully to reveal your print! Repeat a few more times to create a series of prints!



Option 1: Layered Cardboard Stamp

Corrugated cardboard can be hard to cut small or detailed shapes out of, so it will be easier to start this one with a more abstract or simple design. Once your shapes are cut out, arrange them on the matboard backer and use white glue or a glue stick to secure them in place. Let the glue dry. You're done!

Step 1: Cut the corrugated cardboard into shapes for your design.

Step 2: Arrange them on the matboard provided. When you are happy with your design, go to step 3.

Step 3: Glue shapes onto the backer and let dry!



The raised layer of cardboard will be what is printed on the walls of the Galleria (or onto paper, if this is your test print). The background will not show up in your final print.

Option 2: Cord Stamp

For this print we are using thick string or cord to make the raised layer on the board backer. Using the cord in your kit, you can create a picture or design on your backer for printing. It may be difficult to do small or tight shapes with the cord, so larger designs and shapes might be easier to create. It is also easier to draw your design on your board, apply your glue following your pencil lines, and then stick your cord on top of your glue lines.

Step 1: Draw your design on the matboard with pencil

Step 2: Cut pieces of cord for your design. **Notice how Catherine has not crossed her cords over each other. It is important that you don't layer your cords.**

Step 3: Apply the glue to your lines on your matboard and then place your cord on top of your glue lines. Let dry!



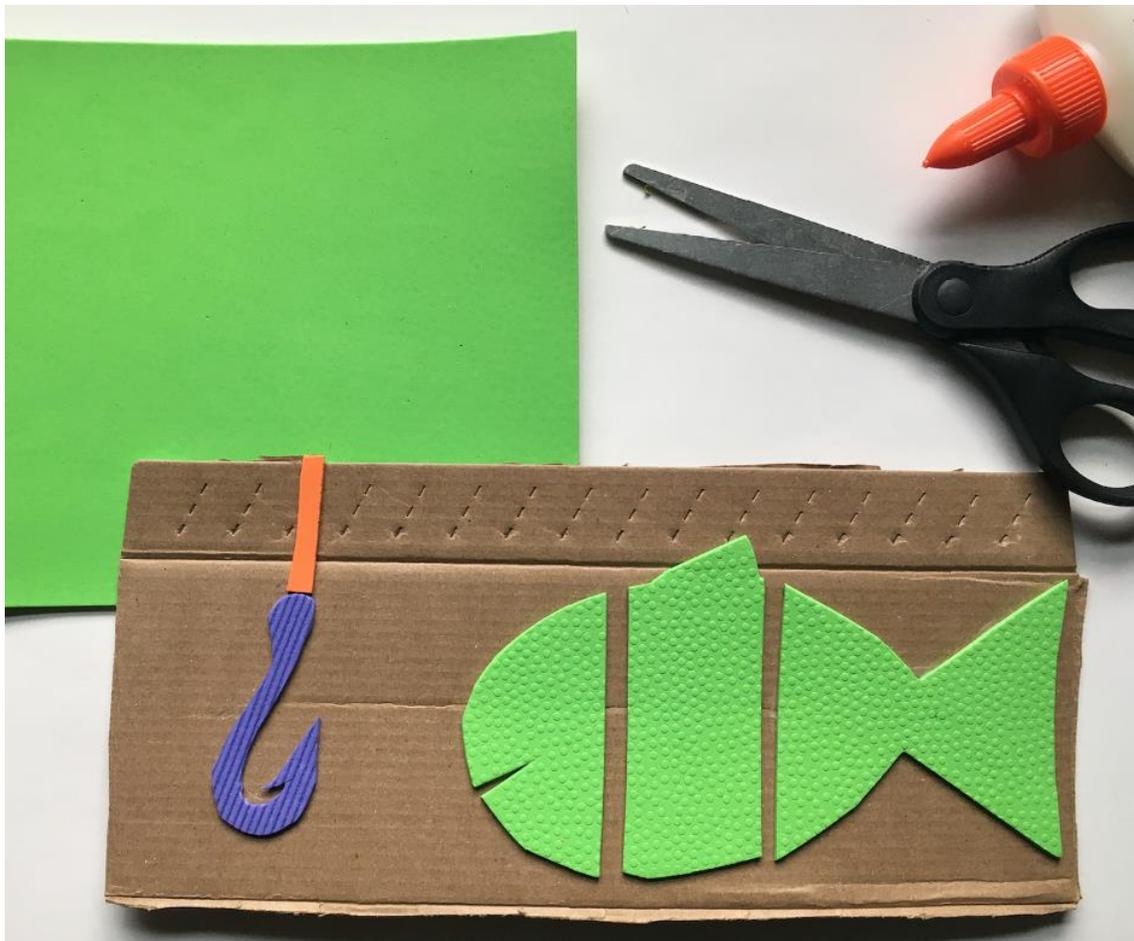
Option 3: Craft Foam Stamp

For the last print we are using craft foam to make the raised layer on the matboard. Now that you have made some larger shapes and designs on the first two plates, you can create more detailed designs using foam sheets. You can draw right on the foam sheets and it is easy to cut out your shapes with scissors. Once your shapes are cut out just glue them onto your matboard backer.

Step 1: Draw your design on the foam sheets with a pencil, pen or marker.

Step 2: Cut out the pieces for your design

Step 3: Glue them on the matboard. Let dry!



Remember to bring two of your completed stamps to Two Rivers Gallery by July 3, so Catherine can use them in the community mural. Visit the Rustad Galleria between July 8 and August 8 and see if you can find your designs in the mural!

A message from Catherine:

The winter before the pandemic I started taking Michif language classes with my local Metis Society in Fort St John. We would meet in the evenings for dinner, lessons and games. We practiced basic greetings and vocabulary by playing bingo games and singing songs. There were often families present with young children as well as elders and grandparents all learning together. I look forward to the day when we can safely meet again and learn in person. I am still very new to learning this language, just like you!

Culture and language work together, and so I have chosen the prompts based on what I experienced with my grandma and grandpa growing up. To get outside in the summer, we would often go hiking, swimming, berry picking and fishing in spots between Fort St John and Prince George. Inside activities included playing games, making arts and crafts, baking or cooking food, and I also loved to read. These are also accessible activities for most people, so they were chosen for the language prompts for this activity.



I would like to thank Métis Elder Stella Johnson for taking the time to review language for the activity I have prepared here. I am very grateful for her encouragement to share language through art with youth and families.

Michif is a mixed language and there are many different dialects spoken by Métis people across different areas. Words and prompts for this activity are from the Northern Michif dialect that is more Cree with some French, and I used the *Northern Michif To Go App*. My grandma did not speak traditional language due to the effects of colonization, but Cree or Northern Michif is the closest dialect that my ancestors would have spoken.

If you would like to learn more about the language, I have a few links below that I have found helpful.

Michif Language resources on the web:

<http://www.learnmichif.com/>

<https://language.metisportals.ca/michif-tools/>

http://www.metismuseum.ca/michif_tools.php

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCQqJGKT9JhN9ZXeiaYpLAIQ>

<https://www.eaglefeathernews.com/education/michif-language-at-your-fingertips-with-new-apps>

And in the App store:

Northern Michif To Go App: <https://apps.apple.com/ca/app/northern-michif-to-go/id1450664591>

Heritage Michif To Go App: <https://apps.apple.com/ca/app/heritage-michif-to-go/id1480241798>

Michif Lessons App: <https://apps.apple.com/ca/app/michif-lessons/id965897763>