

My name is Jessica McMann and I would like to be considered for the Prophets of Music Emerging Artists Award. My first two single releases were during 2020. *Inni* was released on June 20th, 2020 and *Akii* was released on Bandcamp on April 30th 2020. I am planning a release of my first CD in June of 2021.

I am an Indigenous, classically trained musician from Cowessess First Nation. I was born and raised in Calgary, and this is my home. I completed music school in 2017 after 10 years working towards my degree. In 2019, I received an opportunity to play at the Coastal Jazz Festival in Vancouver. During this residency, I composed 10 new songs. *Inni* was one of those songs. While I have performed off and on over the years, this was the first time I felt that I could actually have a music career. I started seriously working on finding places to perform and looking for support as an Indigenous instrumentalist. I found however, that most opportunities are for those under 25. My genre is not strictly classical music these days, but instrumental works that incorporate traditional elements as well as spoken word.

Inni is the Blackfoot word for Bison. This song tells the story of the presence, disappearance, and reappearance of the Bison on the plains. On this song, I play flutes, (Alto and regular), Beverley McKiver (Anishinaabe) is on Piano, and Karen Shepherd (Cree) is on Viola. The song was produced by Laura Vinson (Metis, Cree, Cherokee). It was important for me to have Indigenous women be a part of this work. This song was born of this land and is connected to the wide-open prairies and rolling foothills.

In the past two years I was able to play Femme Wave and work on compositional projects such as *The Apocrypha Chronicles* Sci-Fi podcast. New Works has me on a double bill show with Hermitess in 2021. I applied to the Incubator program, but it wasn't a good fit as I wasn't currently working on recording. I joined Alberta Music in 2019 and started to take their workshops and networking sessions. In October 2019, I was part of the Banff Centre Musicians in Residence program. I learned more about promoting, and specifically how to market a CD. I am currently working on these tasks/learnings. I also recorded my CD *Incandescent Tales* at the Banff Centre. I am looking for creative performance solutions during the pandemic and working on writing more music during this down time. I have a sound piece in the RBC Emerging Artist Residency, and I am continuing to build my capacity in Social Media, which is an area that I struggle in.

I continue to speak on panels of Indigenous classical music, and I have two future projects in Calgary. I will be composing an 8-minute orchestral piece for the Calgary Philharmonic Orchestra and co-writing a piece with Andre Balfour as well as performing it with the Luminous Voices choir.