



Indigenous Wisdom FOR THE EARTH with Madi Sato PRAISING EARTH

Welcome, everyone, and thank you so much for joining us for the Indigenous Wisdom for the Earth series. This series is a place for indigenous people to share their wisdom, their cultural heritage, their beliefs, and the challenges that they face. It is also for groups who work to help indigenous people to bring a voice to their needs and offer ways that you can get involved.

The purpose of the series is to open our hearts and minds to cultures who have treasured our planet and could share with us insights that we can use to become more connected with nature and each other. We hope that you will be inspired, informed and intrigued.

This month our guest is Madi Sato of Praising Earth. Madi is a singer, community leader, and ceremonialist of Japanese Ainu and Celtic roots. She is devoted to raising women's voices for the benefit of our Earth Mother. Madi and her husband, poet Timothy P. McLaughlin, are the co-founders of [PRAISING EARTH](#), an organization devoted to rewilding the human heart through the traditions of song, story, dance and ritual to enliven all people's essential belonging to Earth.



Terra: Welcome everyone. Thank you so much for joining us the Indigenous Wisdom for the Earth series. We have a very special guest today. Her name is Madi Sato. Madi Sato is a singer, community leader and ceremonialist of Japanese Ainu and Celtic roots. She's devoted to raising women's voices for the benefit of our Earth Mother and her Sacred Waters. Madi and her husband, oral poet Timothy P. McLaughlin are the co-founders of Praising Earth, an organization devoted to rewilding the human heart through the traditions of song, story, dance and ritual, to enliven all people's essential belonging to Earth. She is the creative mother of the organization's Song Carriers program, which includes Song Carriers Women's Circles, Basket of Seeds, Grandmother's Alliance, Song Carriers Immersion Training and 13 Moon Song Archives. Madi, thank you so very much for joining us today.

Madi: Good day to you, Terra. Thank you for inviting me.

Terra: If you would like to bring us into the circle with a prayer or song or chant or any offering?

Madi: Yes, yes, I'd be happy to do that. This is a song that is in my Ainu Japanese traditional language for the grandmother fire, who we always go to and ask for guidance. So we'll offer this as a prayer to invite her and all the spirits and ancestors that dwell within the sacred fire.

(Madi sings.)

Terra: That was so beautiful. Thank you so very much. Such a wonderful presence, opening into this call. You can really feel that heartfelt energy. Thank you so much.

Madi: Oh, thank you. And I also did not mention but I was singing to the ancestors and to the sacred water. For all the presences to be with us in this call today for the benefit of enlivening our hearts, the humanity's heart of connection and relations to the great mother in all forms of life. So, thank you so much. (Speaks native language).

Terra: Thank you. Could you tell us a little bit about what your relationship is with music, and how you came into this and the connection that you were starting to share with us?

Madi: Well, I came into the way of song from a very early age, with a mother who sang, I'm remembering now particularly through her grief of losing my father, her husband when I was five years old. And she would, through the night, sometimes very, very early in the morning when the sun was rising, be singing songs and weeping. And I would, you know, in my dream time, hear that and there was an understanding at a very young age that song was a way of expressing our deep soul and spirit. And my upbringing started in the south in North Carolina. And we moved to Japan. And then after about a year of living there, my father passed away. And so we had to return back to America because my mom is a mix of Irish, Finnish, Scottish, English and all of our family, her family is here.



And so that started the journey of my mother not only song but ceremony, bringing myself and my two brothers into the way of Cherokee people. She was born and raised very near the Cherokee reservation and had a very spiritual connection to that tribe at a very young age. And when my father died, we were immersed in the culture of the dances, the sweat lodge, the prayers, and I grew up that way. And as I went on my path I found that living in the woods of Tennessee and North Carolina, we moved around quite a bit when I was young. I would go out into the forest or by the river and my comfort in the loss of my father, as well as my mother singing, I would go and I would sing to the trees and sing to the river. And that would bring so much comfort to my heart, not understanding really how to process that grief of the loss of a father. And I also just by osmosis by being around the ceremony picked up songs in the Cherokee tradition from my mother.



Photograph by Oscar Nilsson

And words and the way of prayer. And so as I went on my journey, song was always there. And as we do growing, as a teenager, I began to be interested in the blues and gospel, r&b, jazz music. And I took a journey into learning about that, that kind of music. And by the age of 18, I was performing with a band and began to make my first CD. And then it was like a flash a span of about 15 years of being a recording artist and singer, songwriter. But it was a very pivotal moment where I found myself invited to return to Japan and because of the trauma of losing father, my mother never returned back to Japan my whole life. So I always thought that's a place that we may never want to go back to because it's so painful but I got invited there from a dear artist friend who said, "Come on the journey."

And it's just was one of those moments where it was like a crossroads where I was going in a direction of following my career path as a solo singer performing artist to Los Angeles. Or put on hold the tour and my apartment that I was moving to in Los Angeles and go to Japan. Little did I know that that trip that month long trip back to Japan would turn my life path in a different direction. And I reunited with my family, my grandmother eighty-eight years old and was taken to a traditional folk song concert, of Japanese folk songs and sat in the audience with my Auntie Kyoko.



Madi: Thank you so much, Terra. That was a very powerful gathering of all of humanity, and lots of beautiful things are coming from that. And for me, song is a gift of the human being as a... an offering, as a gifting back, that reciprocity back to the Earth and all the beings that give us life. And so song belongs to all of us. And when you go back to the way the ancestors utilized song, and you see that, that song, in a way translates the offering of your heart, the deep love and gratitude you have in your heart, to the spirit, to the sacred powers that are life bringers and life takers.

And I just wanted to say, you know, this phenomenon of the modern world of commodifying everything, including music, and song has been to our detriment and you know, the Earth is longing for all of us to offer our hearts through the song and it's a prayer. It's simply a prayer. And there was no one in the community or tribe, who was asked not to pray. So when we remember that when we open our mouth and we combine that with the intentions in our heart, that literally we are co creating life. And we are part of that reciprocity. There is no "me" singing, but it's the "we" singing through us. And one voice is made up of ancestors all the way back to the beginning fire of the Earth. And then the first rains is all in our voice.

What happens to be going on with the moon, the cycle of the moon in this very moment. What plants and animals you've been eating, in all of this is in our voice. So when we think we have any control over how we're going to, you know, make our voice sound, that that's not the point. So, song and prayer through song is made for all people. And so when we get out of that mindset of performance, and that I have to be good in any way, and allow yourself to be that tender, vulnerable spirit that you are, good medicine is made. Life Force moves through you and that comes out and affects life all around you. So I just I'm so passionate about everyone coming to sing and in the Song Carriers communities, we are there to remember that way. And in the traditional ancestral songs, they're helping us remember the way and so you'll find that we sing primarily in the mother tongues because in that those syllables in those songs, there was a time when the ancestors knew that song was prayer. And it's helping to gather up that lifeforce and that you know, truth that that you are made to sing. And so no one is excluded. Everyone is included.

Terra: You know, a lot of cultures and indigenous tribes actually use singing as a connection to the Earth and the intentions and positivity that we put out through our words and praying to the Earth and praising the Earth and being a part of all of that connection comes through the singing. And as you may know, TreeSisters has done a Singing for the Trees last year and we're doing it again this year for Earth Day. And we met some, I guess mainstream feedback, people who were like, "Why would you want to sing to trees? That doesn't make any sense." And it's difficult to put into words what that connection is. And is, is there something that you could offer that we could answer to the people are like, "I don't understand why do you sing to trees?"



Madi: Wow.

Oh my gosh, it's such an innate human memory, to sing to the trees. And sing to all life forms again, as offering as gratitude to give back for all the life that we get. But when, as a culture we're not living the life of you know, I call it living a life of ceremony. We go and sometimes we have these big ceremonies, you know, like, twice a year or at the cycles of the turning of the seasons, but every day is a prayer, a ceremony. And as a simple act of going out and being in the morning air and the sunrise and realizing that the moment you open your mouth, that the vibration becomes animate. It comes alive there really, you know, the songs I think of as beings and they accompany us, and they walk with us. Yeah, it's foreign to me at this point to not understand that our vibrations when we put them into the spoken word or song and send them out, they literally begin to change the DNA and the shaping of the waters of the universe into either beautiful mandalas of balance, grace and protection and all of that. Or you know, using words for violence in for false realities and illusions and that kind of thing. So oh my gosh, the trees. They have their own song and the rhythm of the heartbeat of the Earth and blood moving through the trees may be at a different pulse rate as the human blood and the human heart rate, but they are symbiotic. And the sound in the... the drone the vibration that comes forth from the trees or a blooming rose is palpable. It sends an energy out into the universe.

So try it, that's all I can say is like go out and open your voice even send out one tone at first two tones, three tones and allow some sacred words, gratitude to come out of your mouth and to start developing a relationship. Again, it's nothing new with the Earth and the trees and the river and the ancestors and watch what happens. Watch, they know that you are thinking and singing to them. But it's not only a thinking, you know, just thinking of, we become co-relations with all of life when we open our mouth and let out that sacred vibration. It becomes shapes literally. These song beings are shapes that have sort of an architecture or blueprint of living in good relations with various beings.

Terra: Yes, I don't have the article in front of me but I read once that the hand drum, playing the hand drum, that matches a frequency of the Earth, so that there's actually a frequency in Nature that matches that. And when you're actually standing out in Nature, playing that drum, you can feel that connection intensifies. And it's just such a beautiful way to really bring reverence for the sacredness of the planet we live on, into your being so that you connect on a level. The things that you care about are the things you'll protect. And if you can connect to the Earth on that level, where you're feeling it in your soul, then you're going to be making sure that this planet's well taken care of and treasure it.

And reciprocity giving back because she's constantly providing for us. We need to give back and, you know, as the Earth is right now, society has gotten out of balance where we take and take, when we really need to give back and just connecting just by being present in Nature and singing is a beautiful way to start making that a part of who you are. As a part of your essence.





Photograph by Francesco de Tommaso

Madi: And just when you're speaking, I keep hearing it is about the "we", W E, we.

And our indigenous ancestors and indigenous people understand the "we." And that's what's so powerful about the ways of life. It's not something that is just "oh, I want to do this practice for the next six months and see what happens" but it's, it's giving ourselves to the life of interconnectedness, interbeing.

Realizing that when you make one step, one move, speak a word, that it affects everything around you. And the ancestors would never make a move or not include the sacred fire and sacred water in their decision making in their listening to how to move in a good way..

We do this as humans, we become so human centric that we're thinking about ourselves individually and then our fellow human beings, but that that is not including the "we". And in the minute that you can, as simple as like step outside your door, outside of your walls of your home where everything is temperature controlled and you can turn on at any moment the water and you step outside and just take a deep breath of that air and look around you. And then beyond looking with your eyes, listen. Beyond the listening of your ears, sensing of your heart and your intuition and it's just basic, it's just basic and that is what we are. I'm finding so many of my relatives everywhere I go are thirsting longing for that, that.... real connection with relationship with all forms of life. All of the things we have in lives the material things and the projects we're doing. Could not even be possible or happen without the, the guidance, connection, protection of the invisible ones, more than human ones. And the visible ones that embody the spirit.

You know, my Ainu ancestors believed in the embodiment of the mountain spirit is through the sacred bear. So they reverence the bear because the mountains are in a sense the breasts of the Mother Earth that they nourish, they give us the medicine, the waters from the snow fall begin to melt and come down the mountain. And so, the mountain spirits are in spirits are so very important and give us all of our life and our medicines that we need to live. And the bear is married to the mountain it's like the owner of the mountain and will come down. And the Ainu people, and this was banned during the assimilation, colonization period in Japan as well from taking place but the bear ceremony was a way of life.



And they would use all parts of the bear and keep the bear in and all year round. And then have a ritual, a ceremony of sending that bears... releasing the spirit of the mountain inside the bear back to the mountain, and there would be blessings. There would be great health and well being for the community. And so we can learn a lot from calling in the ancestors and I say that because there are also ancestral lines that are.... have been burned, clipped, made to be forgotten, but through the dreaming, and the women coming together in circle, you know, the “we”, the consciousness of the community, and the longing in the heart and the literal opening of the doorway through that sacred fire back to the ancestors and saying, I am listening. And it's not my agenda but all of our agendas for thriving life. That is when so many... so much magic and so much enjoyment and life comes in that relationship.

So, yes, I just feel such a beauty and in so many people reclaiming their roots and there's something about that it's not only the impact indigenous roots of people, but also the seemingly not intact roots of European and even in Japan with the modern day Japan, willingness to listen and call in the ancestors to, to guide us and how to move through this new time, this new story arising, this new paradigm coming and it is what women are initiated in, bringing life into the world. We are bringing new life, a new way of walking on the Earth, and it's for all people. And all people are of the land and I'm of the land of Santa Fe. This is where I live. So I'm making relations and asking to be adopted by Juniper, by pine, by cottonwood, by the Ojo Caliente River. And we all belong in that way. And these ancestral songs of the Earth and the new songs of the Earth are helping us to remember and reconnect.

Terra: That's what I was just thinking this is, I love the way the tide is turning that people are waking up, and there is a remembering that that connection exists. I love what you just shared about the bear. I actually live in a place of mountains. And that's very inspirational for me. I think society at some point has taken the wrong turn. And we started seeing ourselves as here we are, and here's Nature as if it was outside of us. But the reality is, is that we're made up a water, we're made of minerals, we're made of the sun and the moon and the air, and all the elements, and we've forgotten that. And it is just beautiful to have these pathways back in, even if we don't know what our exact lineage is, we can still connect to them, and they can still be a part of us. Yes, this is absolutely beautiful and I love the way you're, you're presenting all of this.

Madi: To share with everyone who is longing for that connection and longing to use their voices as the connector to the ancestors and as an offering to all forms of life to seek us out. Praising Earth is our nonprofit that houses men's programs, women's program. We do everything in conscious dialogue in alliance with indigenous and non indigenous, if you want to call it that, we could go into a discussion about that. But we have Irish grandmothers and Okinawain and Alliance. And so this is not just a community of women or a community of men, but it is in listening to and you know lifting up to the elders in our community.



And we have programs that we've been guided to, to invite people who hear that calling to go to the wild, still wild lands, where we have our programs where we go out for six or nine days even. Women will go out, they are called the Song Carriers Immersion for six or nine days and we sing, we dance, we pray, we share in sisterhood. Everything is held with our beloved water and fire altar. And we unplug from modern technologies and we just spend this time living in the wild. And the men's programs are called the Green Man Immersion and yeah there's many aspects. You're welcome to contact us and learn about these programs and come and join us because they, they sort of ignite the fire and start to send our roots back to the Earth. We have a chance, I mean, many of us just simply need space and time to listen to the Earth and to what we're being guided to next because we're in the in the between time of not really having in place any rooted... it is growing, there are some communities that are really rooting but our education systems are failing, new ones are rising but we're not quite in the new story. So it's a time of great listening to know how to live, how to be. So that 250 years from now, seven generations from now, have a beautiful earth and are living in good relations. So there's a great purpose for us to gather together in community at this time.

And come and find us we also have some sister communities that have connected, and we have a Song Carriers Austin Community now guided by Kate Lindsay and Gabriela Masala. And we have a Song Carriers Tucson community guided by Jane Innmon and Devorah Shipione and these women have gone through my Song Carriers Immersions. And for two years, they are integrating the way of the Song Carrier and it's creating a community around the songs in the water and fire. And the men are also doing this as well. They're growing their communities and what we see as the purpose is that individuals go through that awakening and reconnection and rerouting back to the Earth. And from that place, we come together for the purpose of the "we" of the community, of the Earth, of all life. And so that's the, what we're seeing is that these communities are beginning to form not only in Santa Fe here but beyond. And we're just following. We're being guided, you know, not making decisions on what to do next or "Wouldn't it be great to have this project or this program?", but listening, making our prayers, singing and dancing and guidance from the elders of our community and the wisdom keepers. So it's a co-creative journey and it's a beautiful one.

Terra: Absolutely. It's so inspirational and so beautiful and just finding a place that offers that kind of guidance, that connection and how to come back into that state of, you know, reverence and committed is such a wonderful amazing thing to have to offer. Let me make it clear because our audience is international that your... well your website is [Praising Earth.org](https://www.PraisingEarth.org) so people can go there and read about it. These programs right now, are they only for people in the USA or do you have any online ways to participate?

Madi: These programs are rooted on site in the forest in Santa Fe, but it's definitely open internationally. Anyone can, can come and take these nine days or six days. And another initial way to connect with us is through what we have, it is called the Sustainers Network.



You make a monthly donation. And each month you'll receive a song and poem blessing from myself or my husband, Timothy McLaughlin. And you will also receive wisdom keeper interviews and a message from the what we're calling the Home Well and Fire of Praising Earth. And that's a wonderful way, so you just go to PraisingEarth.org. Click on "Join the Sustainers Network" and make a donation and we do rely on and appreciate those that feel that this work is very important and necessary and good to donate.

And we give a gift in return and it's one way to begin to learn about how we are growing community here and then when the calling happens, you come to one of the programs or go to Austin, Texas or Tucson, Arizona and join in one of the community gatherings that are intentionally happening all year round. This is not just a come and experience one time, but it is how can we do this as a way of life?

So at any point that someone finds himself in our neck of the woods, they can join in one of our gatherings and, you know, as time allows, I have three children, my husband and I, and it feels so right and good to be routed here. And be singing, with the trees and the waters here and enlivening that memory. And then people go back to their own home and lands and begin to awaken their prayer life, their song life, they're making offerings and speaking to the more than human family of life.

Terra: It's such a wonderful way to actually experience it to really make it a part of who you are so that you can carry it with you. And just the entire mission that you have is... even if you can't make it out to that part of the country it's wonderful to support. I see your Sustainers Network; you offer this gift to all levels of support. So that is very supportive.

I'm thinking now about some questions that we receive around our Sing for the Trees.



- MADI SATO FROM PRAISING EARTH

Photo courtesy Praising Earth; Meme by Kate



We actually have a program also known as the Groves, which are local groups of women that meet in community. We do sistering and every Grove, each local person does different things. But it's just making me think about some of our offerings in general. And a lot of the groves are the ones who are going to be going out and holding their own circles for Sing for the Trees for this Earth Day. And one of the questions we get around this are people who are like, "I'd love to do that. But I'm so embarrassed. My singing voice is horrible." I wonder if you have any words to encourage people to get past that mentality of this is about whether or not I'm a good singer. And rather, I'm connecting to something bigger to get them past that. I don't know... stage fright, I guess?

Madi: Well I... I might be bold and strong and say, you need to start with how you address your own voice with love and reverence. In beauty, in praise of life, because our voices are not just our own, we don't own them in a way they are, are full of the ancestors and all of the forces of life when you have not enlivened and awakened your voice for a lifetime, some of us because of the shame of the comparison of so called professional musicians, professional singers. When you have that trauma, when you begin to open your voice again like a mama, like a poppa, I urge you to treat that voice with such love and gentleness, tenderness as you would a brand new baby that is just born.

What would you say to that baby? What would you say to that first sprout of a big maple tree that is going to grow that has just come out of the ground? This is the beginning of your voice gaining form and strength and fire and water enlivened. So that's one of the first things I would urge to be very strong. Stop talking any negativity about the voice. That's some old story of how we keep our spirit and the ancestors and all of our inner being knowingness sort of locked away in a cage or something is by using that language of "I'm not a singer. You should hear me sing. You know, I can't even carry a tune. Da da da da da"... that needs to stop. It's a form of shame and in a way abuse to you, to the own self, to the own ancestors. So I always... we have an agreement in our community that, you know, even we might think these thoughts, but don't energize it by speaking them over and over and over again.

Terra: A lot of times in Western cultures, going out and singing in public isn't something that you do. But again, in other cultures and indigenous ways, singing in community and going out in the public place, was very much a part of life.

Madi: I mean, even as a performer at one point on my path, I had a sense. Sometimes, you know, when there was a room full of people there to hear a performance that I was singing to the trees outside those walls of that theater.

That literally the purpose of song as a human gift is to uplift, life, grief, praise, all of it. And as you spoke, yes, it was very much an everyday thing to sing and you wouldn't... you're never alone when you sing. And in the ancestral community way was the group singing. And because community has been, you know, sort of torn apart that strength in solidarity of community has been lost somewhat and that's why it's so important because when you gather with community, you're only as strong as your community.



You're only as strong as the voice of the whole, you know. And, and if you don't have a community, you're only as strong as your voice and connection to and sound through with all of the sacred powers of life.

So this idea of going out and... we need to go out of our house and go into the forest and sing again and sing to the river. And I'm hearing right now in my heart, people are saying, but I don't know any song. So I like to encourage people to learn a song from their own bloodline initially. And this is going to take you on a journey of sort of like a, what do you call it a discover... Explorer, and you're going to go out and you're going to ask first and make an offering with cornmeal or water or tobacco and say, guide me to a song of my ancestors so that I can reconnect. And that's what started me on this work of the Song Carriers is that that is exactly what happened to me. Almost my whole life, you know, through my 20s into late 20s I did not even know my, my depth of culture of Japanese Ainu. And when I returned to Japan, and I discovered a teacher there who lived through the rice fields behind my Aunt Kyoko's house, and I went there and within one hour, I was singing a song in my ancestral language. And a huge confidence rose inside of me. A huge sense of belonging. That can happen for people, humanity with one song. It may take a lifetime or more to learn a whole language, but I'm finding that in one simple song in the ancestor language, will enliven that sense of belonging so strongly that your roots begin to with a sense of belonging and safety stretch out again.

Because many of us right now are just feeling... especially those that have come from other places, Europe, Africa and come to Turtle Island and there's already you know, indigenous peoples that's inhabited here for a long time and not feeling like we have any right to belong. So one of the greatest ways rather than looking to, so much to the human family and saying, "Do I belong to your tribe? Do I belong because I live here? But going simply to those trees in your backyard, the soil and talking to them and asking for that belonging to, that embracing of you as one of the human family of this land. And I believe that great blessing will come in that. So, one song in the ancestral tongue as far back as you can go. But even like in some of the European languages of Italian or French or German, singing something that's just a little older than the... and I'm going to say it... colonizing way of English that English has been used for. And we can also, my husband is doing a lot of work around this. For decolonizing, English even, you know and in through poetry and through prayer, that we are changing our relationship with that language that has created so much suffering so much control and pain. I encourage those listening to go ask an auntie or someone in the community who's from Estonia. Who's from Hokkaido. You know, someone connected to your lineage and say, "Do you have a song? Do you know who I might ask for a song?" And start lifting it up in that morning sunrise and ask for a blessing on your relations with that song. Make an offering though. If you don't have the cornmeal or tobacco, simply pour some water down on the Earth.

Terra: "Praising Earth works with community to reestablish the oral traditions of song Poetry and storytelling to my enlighten all people's essential belonging to Earth and inspire our collective stewardship of the complete wild ecology." I love that it's song, poetry, storytelling. The vocal qualities, chanting even, give off a vibration that you just feel. It also connects with the outer world.



The tree has a vibration and when you're standing next to a tree singing to that tree is picking up your vibration and returning vibrations to you. And it's just such an interconnectedness. And I just love what Praising Earth does. I hope a lot of people come to your website and learn some more and that you have a program for men as well. I think that's an important part of what's going on in our Earth today is giving them a place to come back and return and remember who they are. There is a need for men to also have their own programs and offerings.

During the Gathering for Humanity, there was a... I don't know if it was a song or chant that you said that some women or a tribe asked you to share with that group and it was a chant for the water. And you taught it to everybody in (there) and it was so beautiful and so moving. And that's the chant... I actually took that chant that you taught us and that's what I did for our first Sing for the Trees event. But a chant is something anyone can do and you still have that connection. Is there that chant, if you know which one, I'm speaking of, or a chant that you would like to share with our network that they could take and also use on our Sing for the Trees Earth Day event?

Madi: Well, there is a song being known as “Nee bee wah bow” in the Ojibwe way of speaking of the sacred waters, that is now traveling and being asked to be sung by all women. And originally the song when I received it from a moon lodge leader of Ojibwe descent, and you know, along with that came instructions of not sharing it on the internet and only the women singing it and to sing it every time we are at the waters. And so we walked with this song for many, many years in our community honoring the way the grandmothers asked for this song to be shared.



Photo by William Farlow-Leva

Now, a year ago, I think it's been... the grandmas of the lineage shared it in a video online and because I think they heard that this is very urgent to not hold back anybody from any of the people to sing this water song because we need we need it now. So we are seeing how we have tradition and we have ways of honoring the protocol. But at this moment because of the times things are being opened, they're being shared.



Because there's a realization that it's not just for one people. It's for the life of all things on this Earth. So the song now has been shared on the internet. And so I feel I have permission to sing it on this program as well.

And you will find it just looking up the water song “Nee bee wah bow” when you look online and see the grandmother singing it, but basically, it's “The waters that I carry are the blood of Mother Earth, the waters that I carry are the blood of Mother Earth.” And to some that are asking, “Can this be sung by men?” and I haven't heard yet from the grandmas that this is being shared with the men but what I feel in my heart is that the men can sing the melody of this song. And we need to together be singing this. So I always invite our men, community to join us in this song, by humming with us and offering that support and protection, as we move forward boldly with courage and a lot of reverence and love for all of life and finding that, you know, it is about the men, the women, and everyone in between. Children, elders, future generations, ancestors. But the women, being the caretakers of life and being the ones who, literally birth life, are laying the foundation of prayer, and that's why we've been seeing this huge movement of women's circle and gathering. But I tell you, what, the men are coming together in our community in such beauty, such vulnerability, and I am getting to witness this and they pray in between the times the women gather in our community and then once a season we come together and we have a collective prayer. And we're making new life, new story. So I'll end with this “Nee bee wah bow” Ojibwe Water song.

(Madi sings - phonetical spelling below.)

Nee bee wah bow
En die en
Aah key mis kquee
Nee bee wah bow
Hey ya hey ya hey ya hey
Hey ya hey ya hey ya ho

(Sing 4 times to each direction.)

Terra: Thank you so very much that was so very beautiful. Is there any last knowledge or wisdom or anything that you wish to share with our network before we close out?

Madi: Let me listen in Terra. I just want to give thanks for this moment to share from my heart and especially (speaks in Native language) sacred fire. (Speaks in native language) sacred waters for your presence in this conversation and may all of this serve the life to come, the life that is here. And may our fire and water, be in sacred balance, sacred masculine and feminine in balance with all of life so that we can thrive and tap into that great joy that it is to be in a human body.

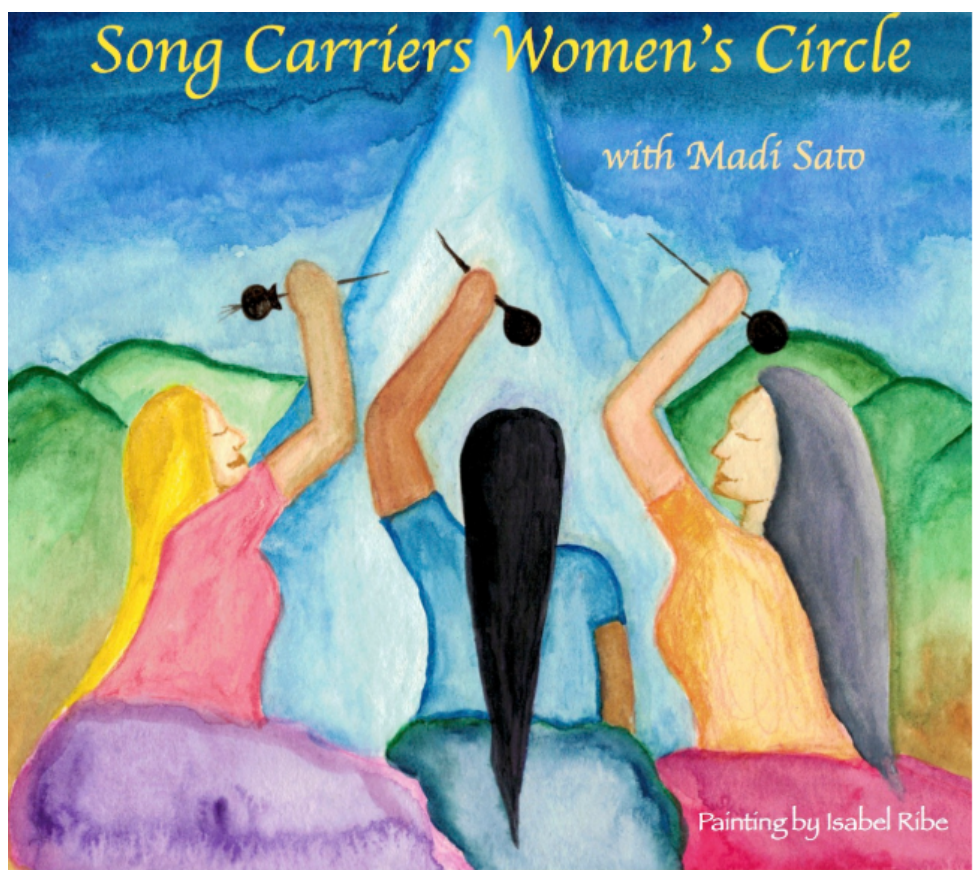


And may we all remember the waves of the ancestors and to lift up our voice, even if it's a few words or a chant to return that love that we so every day of our lives receive from the Great Mother, Great Father, spirits of the land and return it back. May we be good stewards and open vessels and listening for the next steps in the ways to be with the children nowadays, with so much that they are having to navigate. I cry out to all of the Guardians in the ancestors and forces of life to be with the children, give them the strength and endurance for these times. And I thank you so much, Terra and the TreeSisters, and all of the human family that are coming together for the benefit of the “we” in the community, and not one but all of everyone's health and wellbeing for this next cycle to come. All that way to the winter solstice, many, many, many blessings to you. (Speaks in Native language).

Terra: Thank you so much for that absolutely beautiful transmission, for taking the time to be here with us. For inspiring us all. May we all sing praises to the Earth.

Thank you, everyone for joining us.

~~~~~  
*Transcript in American English*  
*Transcript and PDF by Terra Canova*





treesisters

---

women seeding change