

## Metis Fiddle Workshops with Alyssa Delbaere-Sawchuk

This winter 2019, Métis fiddler Alyssa Delbaere-Sawchuk, visited Sistema Toronto's three centres to lead a [series of workshops](#) on Métis fiddle music, oral learning tradition, improvisation, and cultural history. Over the course of each three-day workshops students learned about slides, drones, clogging, spoons, and grooves, and increased their cultural literacy in Indigenous music. Sistema Toronto – Parkdale students performed what they learned during the workshops at the Spring Into Parkdale festival on May 11.

Sistema Toronto is dedicated to promoting cultural diversity through repertoire and workshops that reflect our students and Canada's history. By exposing our students to Indigenous music and culture taught by Indigenous artists, these workshops helped broaden our students' awareness and cultural competency of Indigenous music and culture.

Alyssa Delbaere-Sawchuk is a Métis string musician who strives to spread awareness of Métis culture within her communities. She has completed a doctorate in classical and fiddle music traditions on the viola at the University of Montreal. Upon learning about her Red River Métis roots, she and her younger brothers discovered the old Native and Métis style of fiddling traditions of Canada with the guidance of Anne Lederman. Delbaere-Sawchuk and her brothers founded the Métis Fiddler Quartet, a Toronto-based music group that shares Métis music and culture. Their first album received "Best Traditional Album" at the 2012 Canadian Folk Music Awards.

With Delbaere-Sawchuk's professional expertise, our students broadened their cultural literacy of Indigenous music, which was made possible with the support of the SOCAN Foundation. The SOCAN Foundation has a mission to foster, sustain, and promote the creation of Canadian music and to introduce this music to audiences across the country. Students expanded their understanding of Indigenous music and cultural competency, and were also encouraged as songwriters and performers.

We are grateful to Alyssa Delbaere-Sawchuk for her work with our students and to the SOCAN Foundation for funding the workshop and for helping to make them a great success.



L: Delbaere-Sawchuk conducting workshop at Sistema Toronto – Yorkwoods. R: Strings workshop with Delbaere-Sawchuk at Sistema Toronto - Scarborough