

NEWS RELEASE

SANDRA SUTTER

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Cluster Stars Song Book to support Gord Downie's legacy

Calgary, Alberta, July 21, 2021 – Calgary singer-songwriter Sandra Sutter has published a book that combines the talents of four artists to support the iconic Canadian recording artist Gord Downie's legacy of reconciliation with Indigenous peoples.

Cluster Stars Song Book – named after Sutter's first album – not only reflects the music and lyrics from her 2018 release (a year after Downie's passing) but also provides a visual interpretation of the music through photography and art.

"It's my belief that songs are multi-dimensional and lend meaning and colour to our lives," said Sutter, in announcing the release of her song book. "By listening to the music, reading the lyrics, and reflecting on the art and photography in this book, my hope is that people are drawn into a deeper understanding and appreciation of Indigenous peoples and worldviews."

All proceeds from *Cluster Stars Song Book* go to the *Gord Downie & Chanie Wenjack Fund* (DWF), a national charity that is part of Downie's legacy dedicated to reconciliation and improving the lives of Indigenous peoples. DWF embodies the singer-songwriter's commitment, and that of his family, to working with Chanie Wenjack's family to continue the conversation that began with Chanie's residential school story, and to aid our collective reconciliation journey through a combination of awareness, education, and action.

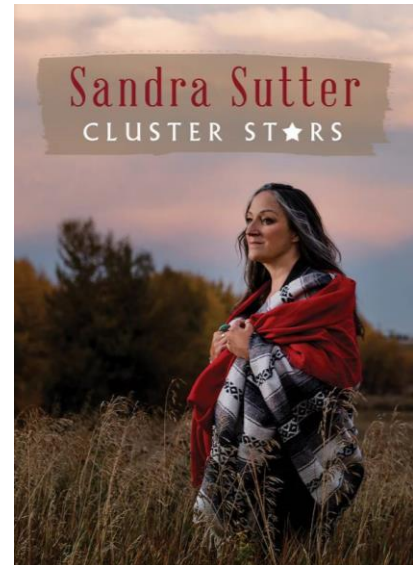
"After learning Chanie Wenjack's story, Gord dedicated his final years to educating himself about residential schools and the impact they continue to have today. He also used his talent to raise awareness of Chanie's story and urge all Canadians to "Do Something" to move reconciliation forward to build a better Canada," shared Sarah Midanik, President & CEO, DWF. "To have artists like Sandra carry on Gord's work and ensure Chanie is never forgotten is phenomenal. We are so grateful for her support as an Artist Ambassador and through the song book."

Sutter, a Cree-Métis who was adopted and raised by a non-Indigenous family, says she never had the opportunity to meet Gord Downie, but shares his vision of reconciliation and wants to support his legacy through the *Cluster Stars Song Book*.

"The songs of *Cluster Stars* are meant to bridge worldviews and present an opportunity for people to explore their own thoughts and feelings through music, words and images, just as Gord Downie promoted truth and reconciliation through *Secret Path*," Sutter said.

Secret Path is a 10-song album and graphic novel produced by Downie in collaboration with Jeff Lemire. It tells the story of Chanie Wenjack, a 12-year-old boy who died more than 50 years ago during his flight from the Cecilia Jeffrey Indian Residential School near Kenora, Ontario.

Sutter's song book includes the music and lyrics from her *Cluster Stars* album, along with images from photographer Ramsey Kunkel (Strathmore, AB), colourable illustrations from Delree Dumont (Nakusp, BC) and drawings from Brooke Glover (Calgary, AB). Her song, [*Indian in the Child*](#), also reflects the legacy of residential schools.



Cluster Stars was recognized for the Best Americana recording at the 2018 Native American Music Awards in Seneca, New York. Sutter, along with Juno award winners Chris Burke-Gaffney (The Pumps/Orphan) and Vince Fontaine (Eagle & Hawk/Indian City), was recognized for the Best Producer/Engineer at the 2019 Indigenous Music Awards. Most recently, Sutter was recognized as the Métis Artist of the Year at the Summer Solstice Indigenous Music Awards taking place online on June 12.

Cluster Stars Song Book and album are available through Sandra Sutter's website: sandrasutter.com/sandra-s-store. All donations for the songbook go to the DWF in support their programming and events.

Production of *Cluster Stars* Song Book was made possible by the Calgary Arts Development Association.



About Cluster Stars

Cluster Stars was inspired and endorsed by Elders Reg Crowshoe and Rose Crow Shoe of the Piikani First Nation in southern Alberta. The album was named after a pattern on the family tipi flaps; light creates a star cluster image on the tipi floor and represents a safe space to gather and share. In this context, *Cluster Stars* represents the coming together of Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples in the spirit of reconciliation.

About the Gord Downie & Chanie Wenjack Fund

Inspired by Chanie's story and Gord's call to build a better Canada, the Gord Downie & Chanie Wenjack Fund aims to build cultural understanding and create a path toward reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples. Our goal is to improve the lives of Indigenous Peoples by building awareness, education, and connections between all peoples in Canada.

For more information or to schedule an interview:

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