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What comedian Ryan McMahon is hearing, reading and looking forward to

By BRAD WHEELER

Comedian Ryan McMahn is currently spending time enjoying indigenous artists and literature

They called them colonization roads, a network built to spread early Canadian settlers across the country. The roads were instrumental in building a nation, but they paid little mind to the indigenous people in their way. In a new documentary, *Colonization Road* (airing on CBC's *Firsthand*, Jan. 26), the Anishinaabe comedian Ryan McMahon travels across Ontario to gain insight into colonization and reconciliation, and roads that still need building. We spoke to him about his current passions, from the artful music of Tanya Tagaq to indigenous writers to the First Nations artist Kent Monkman.

What he's listening to: "This past year was an exciting one for indigenous music. I toured across Canada this fall, and I had new music from Tanya Tagaq, Wolf Saga, DJ Shub and Mob Bounce on repeat. I'm hoping 2017 is the year people take the time to discover emerging indigenous art, music, literature, comedy and spoken word – indigenous artists are making the most exciting art in Canada right now."

What he's reading: "I've been inspired by Cherokee scholar Daniel Heath Justice's work on Twitter¹. His daily post, highlighting the work of an indigenous writer, renewed my commitment to indigenous literature. I'm starting 2017 with classics from Maria Campbell (*Halfbreed*, 1973), Marilyn Dumont (*A Really Good Brown Girl*, 1996) and Lee Maracle (*Celia's Song*, 2014)."

What he's looking forward to: "I can't wait to walk through Kent Monkman's new exhibition, *Shame and Prejudice: A Story of Resilience*, running from Jan. 26 to March 4 at the University of Toronto Art Centre². I might treat this like a video-game nerd trying to buy a new Xbox on Boxing Day and sleep in front of the gallery to be the first one in the space. Monkman's new show will be a must-see if you're interested in a funny and critical indigenous response to Canada's 150th birthday."

Ryan McMahon stars in Colonization Road, airing on CBC Television's Firsthand³, Jan. 26, 9 p.m.

References

1. <https://twitter.com/justicedanielh?lang=en>
2. www.utac.utoronto.ca/index.php/future-exhibitions
3. www.cbc.ca/firsthand/episodes/colonization-road