

NUXALK RADIO



NUSXIMTA

1. **Susqwimtmacwaw** (3:42)
2. **Ista Nts Ali** (3:05)
3. **Ascmanwastuumx** (3:14)
4. **Ti syut-s alh Siyani** (2:11)
5. **Nucwtsalus** (4:36)
6. **Axw Ku Kwmanu** (3:04)
7. **Uts'ii stlhilh Nuxalkmcilh** (3:07)
8. **Wa skulhlxsaalhts** (3:03)
9. **Nusq'lst Skwanat** (3:08)
10. **Xiku** (1:16)
11. **Anutsnmilh** (1:36)
12. **It7Nuxalkmctmacw** (2:20)

The Nuxalk Radio Station officially launched on June 21, 2014 with

## the mission to help keep the Nuxalk language alive

The station utilized various methods of teaching Nuxalk language on-air and found that singing in the Nuxalk language is a great way to learn Nuxalk.

For 10 years, the Nuxalk Radio Station has played Indigenous music in a variety of different languages from all over the world, but we have had little-to-no new Nuxalk music entirely in the Nuxalk language to broadcast on-air so we decided we needed to do something about it.

Ancestrally, Nuxalkmc (Nuxalk people) would hire a song composer to create a new song anytime there was a special event, a birth, a death or in love or ceremony, creating music in many genres. "The professional Nununsyalmlh (Choir) used to compose almost a hundred songs a year. Singing was so vital to Nuxalk ceremony that special rites were administered to children during infancy to bring them musical success and ability," said Nuxalk cultural leader Snxakila Tallio.

Today, there are only four Nuxalkmc who speak Nuxalk as their first language. The Canadian Government's policies, including a ban on the Potlatch -a critically vital component to Nuxalk culture- as well as the residential school system, aimed to eradicate Indigenous languages completely. Indigenous children were beaten and shamed for trying to communicate in the only language(s) they knew and as result, there is still trauma associated with speaking the Nuxalk language today. It is something Nuxalk Radio Station is very aware of as we navigate our way through learning and teaching the Nuxalk language.

Because the majority of Nuxalkmc are not fluent in the Nuxalk language, we needed to determine how we were going to create new music in the Nuxalk language. Our first step was to work with Snxakila Tallio and Nuxalk Radio language coordinator/host Tatala. They took on the challenge of translating English lyrics to Nuxalk and helping the artists rhyme in Nuxalk. The artists learned that this was no small task, as there are different ways in which Nuxalk words are said when they are in-song, e.g. suuncw becomes suuyuuncw when sung.

We put out a call-out for Nuxalkmc to come together to create music. We had Nuxalk Radio Station hosts Tatala, Ximximana and Q'xta -also known as the local seasoned rapper Rollah Mack, Nuxalk Radio Station's tech genius and radio host Qwaxw, Nuxalk land protector and musician Nuskmata, Nuxalk chef Ximana (Nola Mack), Nuxalk language champion Staltmc Wilhpun, eight year-old girls Ts'ikwalhm and K'ipt who sang a song written by Umq'umlika, music prodigy Coastyn Hall on the piano and our token q'umskiwa (white guy) Randy Brook on wind instruments, all made this album happen. Montréal music producer David Hodges provided guidance and assistance, and artist and multi-instrumentalist Milan André Boronell produced the album.

"At first, it was a challenge to create the songs all in the Nuxalk language, but once we got into a groove, bringing musical ideas to life and translating them to Nuxalk, it became more fun than I expected," said Tatala. "We weren't trying to follow a formula. People were able to make music in the style that they enjoy" said Nuskmata. "It was interesting slipping things from English into Nuxalk, and trying to keep

the meaning we had in our heads and then trying to rhyme... Laughing and being willing to make mistakes in front of each other and we just kept on singing, singing and singing it over until it sounded right," said Qwaxw.

The songs are as unique and diverse as their creators. The musical genres on this album range from dance, a cappella, Hip-hop, and Indigenous traditional. Topics include an ancient Nuxalk story of the four carpenters, love for a grandbaby, Nuxalk empowerment and healing. Qwaxw opens the experience with the song *Susqwimtmacwaw*, a blend of storytelling and music that connects us to an ancient time when there was no music yet.

"All of the songs on the album in our language are really beautiful, respectful and complex. They weren't about ego or any kind of disrespect. I think it is indicative of how the Nuxalk language teaches us how to be," said Nuskmata.

Our Nuxalk Radio Station crew has named this first Nuxalk Radio album "Nusximta." The Nusximta was a crystal ball of sunlight held in a container that qwaxw [raven] freed to provide light to our world.

"This album was made for our people," said Qwaxw. "It wasn't done with the mindset of going global or around the world or anything like that. It was meant for us to inspire ourselves and others to create songs in the Nuxalk language. That it can be done."

## Uts'i stlhilh Nuxalkmcilh.

- Slts'lani (Banchi Hanuse)



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Executive Producer: Slts'lani (Banchi Hanuse) | Special Thanks: David Hodges, Lori George, Megan Moody, Ronald Schooner, Dayna Tallio | Album cover artwork: Anuximana | Photography: Slts'lani

[NuxalkRadio.com](http://NuxalkRadio.com)



*"This song is about the story of the four carpenters. It comes from a time when there was no music yet."*

*- Qwaxw, about 'Susqwimtmacwaw'*



*“I wanted to write a song about our women that didn’t have the words ‘missing,’ ‘murdered’ or ‘violence’ connected to it. This song is for Nuxalkmc women, who descend from beautiful and powerful ancestors and deities. It speaks to our empowering relationships with the land and water, our mothers, daughters, grandmothers, and Aunties. It acknowledges our worth and love for each other. It’s about valued and empowered women. People can feel that without even knowing what the words are.” -Nuskmata (Jacinda Mack), about ‘Ista Nts Ali’*



*“This song is about accepting not knowing where life might lead and trusting in tl’uk’ ta manlh t’ax (our father above) to take us along a good path despite any hardships and challenges we may face.” - Tatala, about ‘Ascmanwastuumx’*



*“This originates from an old Carrier song shared by all across the Carrier country. It is from the war days back in the early 1800s.”*

*- Ximana Nola Mack, about ‘Axw Ku Kwmanu’*





*“Chief Suuncwmay (Tom Henry) spoke to the McKenna-McBride Royal Commission about our land. Uts’ii s-tlhilh Nuxalkmcilh is about that speech and further showing how far we have come as a people after our attempted annihilation and that we have only increased in numbers since. We have survived because our greatest strength is being Nuxalkmc.” - Tatala*



*"This piece was inspired by my father, Lhmtimut - Samuel Nelson, a fluent Nuxalk speaking Elder who freely shared his extensive knowledge of our language until his passing at the age of 91."*

*- Wilhpun, about 'Anutsnmilh'*



*“I was sitting, looking out the window at the [Bella Coola] River on a rainy day, watching the mountains and the trees. I thought about our Nuxalk ancestors, the youth and our language. The moment inspired me to write this song.” - Rollah Mack, about ‘It7Nuxalkmctmacw’*