



NATIVE WOMEN'S
ASSOCIATION OF CANADA

L'ASSOCIATION DES FEMMES
AUTOCHTONES DU CANADA

Building on the legacy of the NWAC Faceless Doll Project: Create your own Faceless Dolls

NWAC's Faceless Doll Project is a collection of faceless felt dolls that will be used to create a traveling art exhibit in memory of the more than 600 missing and murdered Aboriginal women and girls in Canada.

NWAC is committed to the issue of missing and murdered Aboriginal women and girls. For years staff have been traveling the country to raise awareness of this epidemic and the impact it is having on all First Nations, Métis and Inuit communities. Thousands of Canadians have participated in these Community Engagement Workshops from coast-to coast-to coast.

As part of our commitment to the issue, NWAC discussed the need for a hands-on project. Our hope was to visually and physically create a representation of the 582 known cases of missing and murdered Aboriginal women and girls (*What Their Stories Tell Us: Research findings from the Sisters In Spirit initiative*, 2010).

NWAC contacted artist Gloria Larocque, creator of the *Aboriginal Angel Doll Project* to explore the possibility of a similar project that would carry forward the visual representation of strong and beautiful Aboriginal women who have become 'faceless' victims of crime. This collaboration resulted in *NWAC's Faceless Doll Project*. The dolls created through this new project will be used to create a traveling art exhibit in memory of the more than 600 missing and murdered Aboriginal women and girls in Canada.

NWAC's Faceless Doll Project was launched in March 2012 and Community Engagement Workshops were held across the country (funded by the Status of Women Canada). Community members were invited to come and hear the Faceless Doll story and create their very own doll for inclusion in this commemorative art project. All workshop materials were provided.



A selection of faceless dolls from the NWAC Faceless Doll Project.



Two 'Angel Dolls' from the Aboriginal Angel Doll Project were gifted to NWAC and traveled with staff as the Faceless Dolls were being made for the NWAC Faceless Doll Project.



Four panels of the NWAC Faceless Doll Traveling Exhibit were assembled and presented to families who have a missing or murdered loved one in February 2013. The completed Traveling Exhibit will have more than eleven panels of faceless dolls.

The NWAC Faceless Doll Project is now complete and the NWAC Faceless Dolls Traveling Exhibit will be launched on National Aboriginal Day (June 21st 2013) in Ottawa, ON. The Traveling Exhibit is been funded in part by the Elementary Teachers Federation of Ontario (ETFO).

As word of the NWAC Faceless Doll Project spread, NWAC received requests from families, community members, teachers and allies to continue making Faceless Dolls. We are grateful and humbled that organizations and individuals are making their own Faceless dolls in tribute and in solidarity. NWAC asks that you contact us so we can properly thank everyone that contributes to the legacy of the NWAC Faceless Doll Project as well as track the 'ripple effect' of this inspiring project.

To connect with someone at NWAC about the NWAC Faceless Doll Project and receive advice on how to create your own Faceless Doll please call 1-800-461-4043.



No two dolls in the NWAC Faceless Dolls Project are the same.

Getting Started

Materials and Templates. The original NWAC Faceless Dolls are made from felt and all pieces (600 women, 600 hair pieces and 600 dresses) were hand-cut by artist Gloria Larocque. Felt was purchased at local fabric stores as well as dollar stores. NWAC took great care providing a wide range of skin tones, as well as also providing a range of hair colours. NWAC also provided adornments to decorate the dolls such as sequins, flowers, feathers, leaves and scrapbooking stickers. The adornments were placed in large plastic trays and placed on tables. Metis sashes were purchased from a provincial Metis Nation office and were cut in half to fit the size of the dolls. Scissors and white glue were provided to participants as well. We also recommend the use of a hot glue gun as the white glue does not always hold but suggest the glue guns be placed in a separate area, away from small children. We encourage you to make your project your own. Speak to youth, for example, and allow them to decide what materials you will use.



Two faceless dolls receiving their final touches.

An Opportunity to Educate. As you make your own Faceless Dolls, NWAC recommends that you provide statistics and research as well as invite people to come and 'give voice' to their connection to the tragedy of missing and murdered Aboriginal women and girls. We also recommend you download a copy of the *Community Resource Guide: What Can I Do to Help the Families of Missing and Murdered Aboriginal Women and Girls?* at www.nwac.ca to find helpful tips on hosting an event, useful factsheets, as well as a list of vetted resources for teachers and educators. You can also call the NWAC office at 1-800-461-4043.



This resource is available on the NWAC website for free download at www.nwac.ca



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Honour Aboriginal Women and Girls. Please be conscious of the fact that each and every faceless doll represents a missing or murdered Aboriginal woman or girl. This does not mean that dolls should be created in a somber or quiet environment, only that care should be taken to take this process seriously. You may also consider inviting a local Elder to bless the dolls and even participate in the creation of the dolls to ensure that the process is spiritually grounded. We further recommend that completed dolls be celebrated and honoured, perhaps with a small feast or ceremony, as well as displayed proudly and properly.



Two young Aboriginal girls participating in an NWAC Faceless Doll making workshop.

October 4th Sisters In Spirit Vigils. Sisters In Spirit Vigils are a movement for social change. October 4th is day where we honour the lives of missing and murdered Aboriginal women and girls and support families who have been tragically touched by the loss of a loved one. Vigils take many forms, from a rally, to a candle-light vigil, to a workshop, to a moment of silence. We suggest that you consider making your own Faceless Dolls in anticipation of October 4th and have the completed dolls on display as part of your own vigil. For more information on Sisters In Spirit Vigils please visit www.nwac.ca or you can call the NWAC office at 1-800-461-4043.

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October 4th Sisters In Spirit Vigils:
A movement for social change

NWAC is the national voice of Aboriginal women since 1974.

Hosting a SIS Vigil on October 4th is a great way to bring a community together. More information on this movement for social change can be found at www.nwac.ca



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Create your own Faceless Dolls: Aboriginal Woman Template

These images can be used as templates to make your own faceless doll. Simply cut out the shapes and trace onto your material. If you are tracing onto felt, use a thin marker and make sure you have sharp scissors for the hair pieces ☺





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Create your own Faceless Dolls: Aboriginal Girl Template

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