

# Conversation, unity and truth highlight Twin Flames Saskatchewan tour

By Miguel Fenrich  
Staff Reporter

In Canada, people have spent considerable time discussing what reconciliation means and what the future looks like for all Canadians.

For Jaaji and Chelsey June, the married couple who make up Twin Flames, reconciliation means simple conversations.

Their recent Saskatchewan tour and their message of togetherness, reconciliation, and conversation came to a close Nov. 30 with a show in Indian Head after visiting Prince Albert, North Battleford, Estevan, Yorkton, Swift Current and 10 other towns and cities across the province.

“We’re (Canada) making baby steps, and we’re

going forward in this country, hopefully, more in unity, and that’s a really beautiful thing,” June said during one of their 17 Saskatchewan shows spread across 28 days.

“... we literally get to see, I think, every nook and cranny of Saskatchewan. Apparently, we’ve even played in one of the smallest towns, which was also very cool.”

Jaaji and Chelsey June met around a campfire on a television show eight years ago, and ever since, they’ve lived life to the fullest. Playing about 300 shows a year in Canada and abroad, they meet hundreds of people during their journeys as they tell their stories through songs and touch the country with their hope of healing and togetherness.



Twin Flames performs at the Dekker Centre, on Nov 22. Twin Flames, which is now made up of Jaaji and Chelsey June, award-winning Indigenous artists who travelled Saskatchewan on tour. | Photos by Miguel Fenrich

### Plane Song

When award-winning Indigenous singers Twin Flames started touring, most of their journeys were in the Canadian Arctic, in fly-in only communities. Chelsey June, who describes herself as a Heinz 57, felt extremely privileged to see where her husband was born but also spent time reflecting on where she belongs.

“I struggled with that a lot because it’s hard to feel like you belong somewhere when you have so many pieces that connect your puzzle.”

But June wondered if people in the north feel more pride and connection to their culture. She quickly learned that due to colonialism and the churches, Inuit living in their own lands and homes often lack that pride in their identity and where they came from.

One of their songs, titled Plane Song, is a reminder that no matter who you are or where you come from, everyone deserves the fundamental right to be proud of their stories and not have to pick a side.

### Porch Light

As songwriters, they also use music as their way to process life and their emotions.

“Sometimes, we write songs that we never actually plan to release; this is definitely one of those songs,” June said.

Porch Light was written after they met a gentleman in Winnipeg during the Indigenous Songwriters Awards. He asked if he and his sister could take a selfie with them, to which they agreed.

The man returned moments later with a photo of his sister that he’s carried with him for 20 years, hoping that one day she’d return or that there would be answers, desperate to keep her memory alive.

“Neither of us knew how to smile in a photograph like that.”

Living in Ottawa, they were frequently asked to perform during meetings for the national inquiry into missing and murdered

women and girls. Sitting in the back of the room, listening to hundreds and hundreds of families telling the stories, missing their loved ones, forever changes how a person sees Canada, they say.

After returning home to Ottawa after the Indigenous Music Awards, they wrote the song and sent it to the man with the photo of his sister, never planning to release it. But, he asked to use it for a national campaign for awareness of missing women and girls.

“We never want to gain any kind of fame off the tragedies that happened in our communities, and to our family members or to our community members, and so we just figured sometimes songs come through us, maybe they were never ours, to begin with.”

### Native by Nature

June feels that part of their responsibility in having a platform where people are actually listening is to help Canadians understand.

“It’s never a blame game, which is Jaaji’s line usually. When we invite people into our shows, it’s just about sharing. And I think that sharing and

communicating together is how Canada will be a more beautiful country for future generations,” June says.

“The narrative of the youth has really changed. They feel very embarrassed about the last 500 years. But, we assure them, like everybody else that feels responsible, that it is not your fault.”

Jaaji says he believes realizing why Indigenous people in Canada are struggling is essential.

“Our people struggle with a lot of different things that are out of our control, like residential schools, clean drinking water, pipelines and trees being cut down,” he said.

“It was a lot of change in a short amount of time.”

### Giants

“Both Jaaji and I have lost family members who unfortunately chose to take their own lives. It’s something that stays with you forever. So many of our people, our community members, and our young people chose to end their lives,” says June.

“We have more people in our region than anywhere else in the world that end their lives before 20. And so, as musicians, we wanted to write a song that reminds people that no matter how hard things get, we must find that inner strength.

“When we go through hard times, if we use those moments as lessons, we can hopefully help the next people going through it.”

And when Jaaji and June can’t find that inner strength, they remind people to find it outwardly in other people. And so, in this chorus of their song Giants says, “we are bigger mountains, taller than giants and braver than lions.”

“It’s just that message that we can get through anything and that life does get better if we hold on long enough.”

Continued on Page 7

**BATTLEFORDS & DISTRICT CHAMBER OF COMMERCE**  
Connecting voices. Building business.

Chair Derek Schmidt and  
The Board of Directors wishes everyone  
a Very Happy and Prosperous  
*New Year*

**Happy New Year**

From the Board, Staff and Participants  
801-105th Street, North Battleford  
**306-445-6141**

**We're HERE because YOU'RE here.**

Your curiosity fuels our commitment to keep you informed on local news, events and businesses. Together, we make a community that's connected - every minute at [sasktoday.ca](http://sasktoday.ca) and every Thursday in your

**Regional NEWS-OPTIMIST**  
Thursday, December 30, 2021 | Published every Thursday

**BATTLEFORD FURNITURE** **HAPPY NEW YEAR** **New Year Starts Monday January 3rd**

Have lessons of the past finally been learned?  
Joyce Milgaard (left) fought a decades-long crusade to exonerate her son David Milgaard (centre, as a prisoner, right, today) of a rape and murder he was wrongfully convicted of in 1970. Turn to Page 6 for the story.

Nature is Awesome

Looking for to the new and all its...  
A raft of tax hikes...

**LIVING SKY SCHOOL DIVISION NO. 202**  
LIVING TO LEARN

**May the new year bring health, happiness, and success to you and your family.**

*Happy New Year from Living Sky School Division No. 202.*

[www.lskysd.ca](http://www.lskysd.ca)