

## Romola V. Thumbadoo - A Mini Biography



A CIRCLE OF ALL NATIONS  
A CULTURE OF PEACE

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Romola V. Thumbadoo, PhD, Geography, Postdoctoral Research Fellow, is the volunteer coordinator of the *Circle of All Nations*, founded by late Indigenous Elder William Commanda (Algonquin Canoe Builder, Wampum Heritage Keeper, Chief, Officer of the Order of Canada, Hon PhD). The *Circle of All Nations* is neither an organization nor a network, but rather a global bridge-building eco-community linked by late Indigenous Elder William Commanda's unshakeable conviction that in a very fundamental way, as children of Mother Earth, we all belong together, irrespective of colour, creed or culture, and that together, we must regain our respect for this penultimate mother.

Romola is of East Indian ancestry, was born in South Africa, and has resided in Canada since 1970, earning degrees in English Literature at McMaster University (BA Hons and MA.) She worked extensively across the country for the federal government, chiefly within the criminal justice system (working in federal corrections, Indigenous justice and policing, and restorative justice) for over twenty-five years. She is also a writer, photographer and artist.

Over the past two decades, she has supported the efforts of Elder Commanda to advance Indigenous awareness, racial harmony and peace building and environmental stewardship (pro bono). She also serves as voluntary director of the Wolf Project, which is dedicated to honouring efforts to promote racial harmony. Romola is the author of two books on the work of the William Commanda (Learning from a Kindergarten Dropout Books 1 and 2), and has published a photo journal on her kayaking explorations of Bitobi Lake, Quebec, as viewed through the lens of Indigenous wisdom. Romola also honours the Donald Marshall Junior Indigenous justice legacy. Romola met Donald Marshall Junior in 1996, and remained his close friend and activist colleague till his passing in 2009; they worked together on Indigenous Justice and Rights issues, Reconciliation and Peace Building, Strategies for Indigenous Youth Empowerment, and Elder William Commanda's Vision for an International Indigenous Centre. Circle of All Nations commemorates his legacy each September.

In January 2018, Romola completed her doctoral studies in Geography and Cybercartography, under the supervision of Dr. D. R. Fraser Taylor, Director of the Geomatics and Cartographic Research Centre (GCRC), in the Department of Geography and Environmental Studies at Carleton University; her research examined the *Circle of All Nations* discourse of late Algonquin Elder William Commanda (Thesis: Thumbadoo, R.V. (2018). *Ginawaydaganuc and the Circle of All Nations: The Remarkable Environmental Legacy of Elder William Commanda* PhD Thesis. Ottawa. Carleton University. <https://curve.carleton.ca/aa4e3cbb-5b83-464d-8286-a901fcd77b06>). Thereafter, she completed a two year SSHRC postdoctoral research fellowship on his extensive legacy, including on his presence in the online world (see <https://circleofallnations.ca>)

She is Executive Assistant to the Director of GCRC at Carleton University. She is currently engaged in further research on the life, work and legacy of Elder Commanda, photoatlassing, cartography and international children's mapping, and she animates the *Circle of All Nations* work online and elsewhere.