

For Immediate Release

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## Native Earth Performing Arts Announces its 2014-2015 Season

**WEESAGEECHAK BEGINS TO DANCE 27**  
**THE UNPLUGGING** by Yvette Nolan  
**GOD & THE INDIAN** by Drew Hayden Taylor  
**STITCH** by Cliff Cardinal

Toronto, ON (October 16, 2014)—Artistic Director Ryan Cunningham and Managing Director Isaac Thomas are proud to present **Native Earth Performing Arts'** 2014-2015 season, which honours the female spirit and embraces the wisdom passed through generations of Indigenous women.

*"It is a celebration of the feminine and an acknowledgement of the power of women as leaders in our communities," says Cunningham. "Our 32<sup>nd</sup> season is about women who refuse to accept their world and strive to improve it."*

### **Weesageechak Begins to Dance 27**

**November 12 – 22, 2014**

**Aki Studio Theatre**

**Festival Pass \$50; Single Tickets \$10-\$20**

This season kicks off with an eleven-day **Weesageechak Begins to Dance 27**, Native Earth's annual festival of contemporary Indigenous work. The festival begins with presentations of senior Indigenous artist **Gloria Miguel's** *Something Old, Something New, Something Borrowed, Something Blue* (presented in partnership with **Native Woman in the Arts**), in which a female Elder recounts her daily life and the challenges of being a 'senior' in our culture. Next the operetta *I Call Myself Princess* by **Jani Lauzon**, explores the complex world of "Indian" identity through the world of Opera and the journey of Métis Opera student William Morinis. Rounding out the first week of the festival, is **Dinah Christie** and **Tom Hill's** *Paddle Song*, featuring **Cheri Maracle**, the story of E. Pauline Johnson the Mohawk storyteller who gained international fame.

The second week of the festival will feature eleven playwrights, six dancers, **New Zealand's Tawata Productions**, and also four emerging playwrights from Native Earth's intensive playwrights' training program – **Animikiig**. Renowned Indigenous artists **Monique Mojica**, **Tantoo Cardinal**, **Daniel David Moses**, **Santee Smith**, and **Drew Hayden Taylor** will join emerging artists, such as **Cliff Cardinal**, in this jam-packed festival.

### **The Unplugging by Yvette Nolan**

**Directed by Nina Lee Aquino**

**A Factory Theatre & Native Earth Performing Arts Partnership**

**March 14 – April 5, 2015**

**Factory Theatre Mainstage**

**Tickets \$23-\$45**

Native Earth's season continues with three main stage productions in the New Year, the first of which is a co-production with **Factory Theatre**. *The Unplugging* written by **Yvette Nolan** and directed by Factory Theatre's **Nina Lee Aquino**, shares the tale of two Elders who bring traditional knowledge back to a post-apocalyptic world. *The Unplugging* won the 2013 Jessie Award for Outstanding New Play.

**Yvette Nolan** (Algonquin) is a playwright, dramaturge, director and former Artistic Director of Native Earth Performing Arts (2003 – 2011). Her many plays include *BLADE*, *Job's Wife* and *Annie Mae's Movement*. **Nina Lee Aquino** is an award-winning director, dramaturge and playwright. She was the former Artistic Director of fu-GEN Asian Canadian Theatre Company and Cahoots Theatre Company and is the editor of Canada's first Asian-Canadian 2-volume drama anthology "love + relationships" (Playwrights Canada Press). **Factory Theatre** is a vibrant centre of

new play development and presentation, “Home of the Canadian playwright.” Located in the heart of downtown Toronto, Factory produces a full season of all-Canadian plays, many of them world premieres. Factory is edgy and contemporary with programming that celebrates diverse theatrical voices and culturally diverse artists.

***God & The Indian* by Drew Hayden Taylor**  
presented in partnership with Firehall Arts Centre  
May 6 – 17, 2015  
Aki Studio Theatre  
Tickets \$15-\$25

In **Drew Hayden Taylor’s *God and The Indian***, a co-production with the **Firehall Arts Centre**, a survivor demands acknowledgement and accountability for her abuse at a residential school. While panhandling outside a coffee shop, Johnny, a Cree woman, is shocked to recognize a face from her childhood, which was spent in a residential school. Desperate to hear him acknowledge the terrible abuse inflicted on her and other children at the school, Johnny follows Anglican Assistant Bishop George King to his office to confront him.

**Drew Hayden Taylor** (Ojibwe) is an award-winning playwright, novelist, scriptwriter and journalist. Some of Drew’s 26 books have been translated into Spanish, Slovenian, Italian and German. His plays have seen over 80 productions. **Firehall Arts Centre** is based in Vancouver, British Columbia, and produces a season of eclectic theatre, dance and interdisciplinary performances, acting as a host to visual arts exhibitions in its intimate gallery/lounge. Each year the centre hosts over two hundred performances.

***Stitch* by Cliff Cardinal**  
Directed by Jovanni Sy  
presented in partnership with Culture Storm  
June 3 – 14, 2015  
Aki Studio Theatre  
Tickets \$15-\$25

Bringing Native Earth’s 2014-2015 season to a close is ***Stitch* by Cliff Cardinal**, a co-production with **Culture Storm**. Kylie Grandview is a porn star who has suffered massive psychological abuse and consequently makes awful life choices. After a series of self-sabotaging decisions that lead to her own disfigurement and the loss of custody of her child, Kylie makes one last attempt to redeem herself and be heard.

**Cliff Cardinal** (Cree/Lakota) made his theatre debut with Native Earth Performing Arts in *Freeman’s Wake* by Yvette Nolan in the 2005 Rhubarb Festival. Cardinal’s *Stitch* debuted in SummerWorks 2011, winning Theatre Passe Muraille’s Emerging Artist Award. Cardinal’s *Huff* won the Buddies in Bad Times Vanguard Award for Risk and Innovation at SummerWorks 2012. **Jovanni Sy** is the Artistic Director of Gateway Theatre and former Playwright-in-Residence at the Shaw Festival. Sy’s one-man play *A Taste of Empire* was nominated for two Dora Mavor Moore Awards including Outstanding New Play. **Culture Storm** is an organization and network that supports artists in visual arts, performance, music, film and theatre. Culture Storm works with a select group of artists whose work focuses on social justice and cultural issues presenting creative work to audiences to engage and inspire meaningful dialogues.

*“This season is about our Elders, our Mothers, our Sisters and our Daughters,” says Cunningham. “It is a season of partnerships, of premieres and of building bridges throughout our community, nationally and internationally.”*

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**To purchase tickets, call the box office at 416.531.1402**, reserve online at [www.nativeearth.ca](http://www.nativeearth.ca) or visit the box office in person at 585 Dundas Street East. The Weesageechak Begins to Dance 27 Festival Pass is only available for purchase by telephone at 416-531-1402. Single tickets for *God & The Indian* and *Stitch* will be on sale December 2014. For tickets to *The Unplugging*, contact the Factory Theatre box office at 416-504-9971.

## **About Native Earth Performing Arts**

**Native Earth Performing Arts** is Canada's oldest professional Indigenous theatre company. Currently in our 32<sup>nd</sup> year, we are dedicated to creating, developing and producing professional artistic expressions of the Indigenous experience in Canada. Through stage productions (theatre, dance and multi-disciplinary), new script development, apprenticeships and internships, Native Earth seeks to fulfill a community of artistic visions. It is a vision that is inclusive and reflective of the artistic directions of members of the Indigenous community who actively participate in the arts.

Website: [nativeearth.ca](http://nativeearth.ca)

Facebook: [facebook.com/NativeEarthPerformingArts](https://facebook.com/NativeEarthPerformingArts)

Twitter: [@nativeearth](https://twitter.com/nativeearth)

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