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NATIVE EARTH PERFORMING ARTS
announces
The 2018 - 2019 Season

TORONTO, ON – Native Earth Performing Arts is thrilled to announce its most ambitious season with a line-up of remarkable artists and exciting new partnerships from across Turtle Island and beyond. From the world premiere of a play with opera, to a theatrical piece of Bouffon and Indigenous clowning, Native Earth's season is filled with music, dance, and multidisciplinary performing arts. Created from stories of resistance, Native Earth welcomes you to witness the richness of contemporary Indigenous art in Aki Studio and beyond.

"The routes we navigate today were mapped by those who came before us. It is because of them we now cross oceans instead of streets to share our work with the world. As we move forward we honour those artists with stories, with song, and with dance. I promise you this will be good medicine for the heart. I hope you will join us."
– Keith Barker, Artistic Director

I CALL MYSELF PRINCESS

**A Paper Canoe Projects and Cahoots Theatre Production in Association with Native Earth
September 9-30, 2018 | Aki Studio**

**Written by Jani Lauzon
Directed & Dramaturged by Marjorie Chan
Musical Direction by Jerod Impichchaachaaha' Tate**

**Starring: Marion Newman, Aaron Wells,
and Howard Davis, Richard Greenblatt, Courtney Ch'ng Lancaster,**

Seen and Unseen worlds collide when a Métis opera student encounters the opera based on the life of the turn-of-the-century Creek/Cherokee singer Tsianina Redfeather. With music by Charles Wakefield Cadman, a member of the Indianist Movement, this interdisciplinary work explores the tension between representation, inspiration, and cultural appropriation.

RUTAS 2018

PANAMERICANAS INTERNATIONAL PERFORMING ARTS FESTIVAL

**Produced by Aluna Theatre in Partnership with Native Earth
October 3 - 14, 2018 | Aki Studio & Ada Slaight Hall**

RUTAS connects the Americas through the Arts: from the ancestral to the contemporary, artists at this year's festival investigate rites, rituals, and community, with women and Indigenous-led works taking

centre stage. Featuring performances, concerts, films, art exhibits, workshops, conversations, and free late night cabarets.

**WEESAGEECHAK BEGINS TO DANCE 31
ANNUAL DEVELOPMENT FESTIVAL OF INDIGENOUS WORKS
November 14 - 24, 2018 | Aki Studio**

including

2-SPIRIT CABARET

**Presented with Buddies in Bad Times Theatre
November 16, 2018**

Weesageechak Begins to Dance is an annual performing arts festival fostering the development of Indigenous work from across Turtle Island and the world.

Taking place over two weeks in our Aki Studio, Weesageechak brings together emerging, mid-career and established artists to develop and showcase contemporary Indigenous theatre, dance and interdisciplinary creations. The festival offers audiences an opportunity to experience the diversity of contemporary Indigenous art.

We are proud to partner once again with Buddies in Bad Times Theatre to present the *2-Spirit Cabaret*, an exciting evening of performance, music and spoken word by queer and 2-Spirit Indigenous artists.

**NIIMI'IWE: INDIGENOUS DANCE SHOWCASE
GATHERING LIGHT
Native Earth presents a Raven Spirit Dance Production
February 7 - 10, 2019 | Aki Studio**

Choreography by Michelle Olson

Gathering Light follows the journey of seed to flower, beginning with the stirrings of consciousness to the full embrace of transformation. This trio choreographed by Michelle Olson delves into the impulses rooted in our bodies which travel through us to find the light, exposing the structures that do not support our own truths, while revealing the ceremonies that support our full bloom.

Performed in the round, *Gathering Light* creates a sense of ritual space where transformation is an experience the audience intimately shares with the performers.

POUR

**A Civic Theatres Toronto Presentation in Association with Native Earth
February 21-24, 2019 | Theatre Centre – The Franco Boni Theatre**

**Artistic Direction, Concept, Choreography and Scenography by Daina Ashbee
Interpreted by Paige Culley**

Exploring the vulnerability and strength of women, *Pour* uncovers the layers of pain we absorb in our bodies as a result of societies that do not support them.

Like her previous daring works, Daina Ashbee has created a dark and disturbing creation that confronts its audience with intense vulnerability. Paige Culley interprets the work through a courageous performance which traverses liberation, control, pain, and beauty in a live and intimate setting.

ISITWENDAM

**Native Earth presents a Bound to Create Theatre Production
March 18-31, 2019 | Aki Studio**

**Written & Performed by Meegwun Fairbrother
Co-Created & Directed by Jack Grinhaus**

Does healing really have an expiry date?

Isitwendam (An Understanding) is the story of a young man in search of a truth, whose journey leads to a discovery about the father he loathed and lost, and an awakening of himself and his generation.

A fusion of western and Indigenous storytelling that includes Ancient Indigenous Sign Language, drumming, dance, and song, this powerful, heart-wrenching, yet humorous theatrical production examines various perspectives of atrocity and the steps we all need to take to find Isitwendam.

HOT BROWN HONEY

**A Civic Theatres Toronto Presentation in Association with Native Earth and Why Not Theatre
April 5-7, 2019 | St. Lawrence Centre for the Arts – Bluma Appel Theatre**

Hot Brown Honey turns up the heat to deliver lashings of sass and a hot pinch of empowerment. This posse of phenomenal women smashes stereotypes, remixes the system, and dares to celebrate our similarities and differences.

INNER ELDER

**A Nightwood Theatre and Native Earth Co-Presentation
May 8-12, 2019 | Aki Studio**

**Written & Performed by Michelle Thrush
Directed by Karen Hines**

Inner Elder takes the audience on a journey of transformation through laughter and real-life memories of Gemini Award-winning Cree artist Michelle Thrush as she explores her own inner elder. Using a delicate blend of Bouffon and Indigenous clowning, this performance offers a magical experience in the theatre and an extraordinary vision of our world.

★★★★ “A master storyteller [...] Thrush’s recollection is so vivid, it sears itself into your consciousness.”
– Calgary Herald

PAPRIKA FESTIVAL 2019

May 20 - 26, 2019 | Aki Studio

For the fourth year running, Paprika Festival is partnering with Native Earth to present the 18th annual youth-led performing arts festival. Following a year of professional theatre training and mentorship programs, Paprika Festival showcases creations from the next generation for one full week in Aki Studio.

Paprika programs are free of cost for participants and offer exceptional training in: playwriting, performing, directing, producing, collective creation, design, and arts administration. New in 2017, through the support of Native Earth and other industry partners, Paprika Festival launched the Indigenous Arts Program to support and present the work of young Indigenous artists. For more info: www.paprikafestival.com.

SHANAWDITHIT

**A Tapestry Opera and Opera on the Avalon Production in Partnership with Native Earth
May 2019**

Music by Dean Burry

Libretto by Yvette Nolan

Starring: Marion Newman

A new opera centred on the story of Shanawdithit (1801-1829), the last recorded surviving member of the Beothuk Nation in Newfoundland, and the extinction and erasure of her people. In the last months of her life, she created a series of coded drawings that speak of the loneliness of survival and lost history. Collaboratively interpreted by Indigenous artists from across Canada, including **Aria Evans, Michelle Olson, Jerry Evans, Jordan Bennett** and **Lori Blondeau**, *Shanawdithit* is a work unlike anything in opera.

DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS

ANIMIKIIG CREATORS UNIT

2018 – 2019

Now in its tenth season, the Animikiig Creators Unit (formerly *Young Voices*) is a two-year development program for emerging Indigenous creators, offering them the opportunity to develop their craft through individualized development plans and resources under the guidance of professional mentors in consultation with the Program Director Diana Belshaw.

The new group of Animikiig Creators are: **Jenn Forgie, Frances Koncan, Smith Purdy, Natalie Sappier, Olivia Shortt, Ty Sloane**, and **Quelemia Sparrow**.

MSKOMINI GIIZIS RESIDENCY

July-August 2018 | Aki Studio

For the second round of Mskomini Giizis Residency, through Metcalf Foundation's 2016 Creative Strategies Incubator, Native Earth welcomes Dora-nominated multidisciplinary artists **Spy Dénommé-Welch** and **Catherine Magowan** of **Unsettled Scores**, and contemporary dance artist and choreographer **Christine Friday** of **Friday Creations** who will be developing their latest work at Aki Studio.

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Native Earth Performing Arts is Canada's oldest professional Indigenous theatre company. Currently in its 36th year, Native Earth is dedicated to creating, developing and producing professional artistic expressions of the Indigenous experience in Canada. Through stage productions (theatre, dance and multi-disciplinary art), 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.



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