

For Immediate Release: April 9, 2019 • Please include in your listings/announcements

NIGHTWOOD THEATRE and NATIVE EARTH PERFORMING ARTS present
the Toronto Premiere of

INNER ELDER

Written & Performed by Michelle Thrush

Directed by Karen Hines

May 8-12, 2019 at Aki Studio

★★★★ "A master storyteller...Thrush's recollection is so vivid,
it sears itself into your consciousness." – The Calgary Herald

Nightwood Theatre and Native Earth Performing Arts are thrilled to present the Toronto premiere of the critically acclaimed touring production of *Inner Elder*. Written and performed by Gemini award-winning Cree Artist **Michelle Thrush** and directed by **Karen Hines**, *Inner Elder* premiered at One Yellow Rabbit's High Performance Rodeo in 2018 to standing ovations and sold-out houses. Thrush won the 2018 Betty Mitchell Award for Outstanding Performance and the play was nominated for Outstanding New Play and Outstanding Production. *Inner Elder* runs from **May 8-12, 2019** for six performances only at **Aki Studio**.

Inner Elder takes the audience back to Thrush's childhood in 1970's Calgary. Through a journey of transformation, laughter and real-life memories, Thrush explores her own inner elder. Following a young Indigenous girl navigating a world of alcoholic adults, aliens, and the spiritual presence of her guiding grandmothers, we witness her transform into a mischievous spry old woman. A delicate blend of Bouffon and Indigenous clowning lend this powerful, humorous production a heightened effect, as we get an extraordinary vision of our world.

"She has a compelling story to tell, but it's the elegant, sly way she weaves it that makes *Inner Elder* such a treat." – The Calgary Herald

The acclaimed Calgary-based Cree artist and activist, **Michelle Thrush** has over 40 professional credits in film, television and theatre with her first film role at the age of seventeen. She is best known for her role in CBC's *North of 60* and *Arctic Air*, Sky TV's newest series *Tin Star*, and APTN's hit *Blackstone* for which she won the Canadian Screen Award for Best Actress in a Continuing Leading Dramatic Role. Her theatre involvement includes being one of the founding members, co-director, and actor in the ground-breaking theatrical extravaganza *Making Treaty 7*, and directing for Theatre Calgary's 2018 Season opener *Honour Beat* by Tara Beagan.

Karen Hines is a Dora Award-winning director and performer, and a two-time finalist for the Governor General's Literary Award for Drama (*The Pochsy Plays; Drama: Pilot Episode*). Previous directing credits include all of adult horror clowns **Mump & Smoot**'s shows, as well as world premieres of Linda Griffith's, including *Age of Arousal* (Alberta Theatre Projects). Karen has performed extensively in Canadian stage, television and film, including three seasons on CBC's Emmy Award-winning *Newsroom* and her own prize-winning short films featuring her dark stage persona 'Pochsy' has screened internationally. She has written seven award-winning plays, and her recent solo *Crawlpace* enjoyed sold out runs from Toronto (Videofag, Soulpepper) to Vancouver (Boca del Lupo), and is being adapted through Telefilm as a feature film.

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the Toronto Premiere of

INNER ELDER

Written & Performed by Michelle Thrush

Directed by Karen Hines

Lighting & Scenic Design by Sandi Somers

Composed by Sandy Scofield

Sound Design by JP Lord Sound Design

Stage Management & Lighting Direction by Cimmeron Meyer

Produced by Grant Burns

**Aki Studio, Daniels Spectrum
585 Dundas Street East, Toronto**

May 8-12, 2019

OPENING NIGHT: Wednesday, May 8, 2019

Wednesday to Saturday at 8 pm

Friday matinee at 1 pm

Saturday and Sunday at 2 pm

Tickets: \$25-\$30

Available online at nativeearth.ca, or by phone at 416.531.1402

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#InnerElderTO

NightwoodTheatre 

As Canada's foremost feminist theatre, **Nightwood Theatre** provides an essential home for the creation of extraordinary theatre by women. Founded in 1979, Nightwood has created and produced award-winning plays, which have won Dora Mavor Moore, Chalmers, Trillium and Governor General's Awards. The company has been led by Artistic Director Kelly Thornton and Managing Director Beth Brown, who have received public acclaim in artistic excellence, advocacy, and the successful training and development of emerging female talent. This season, Thornton announced her departure from Nightwood on April 30 and the company is now pleased to welcome its newest Artistic Director Andrea Donaldson as of May 1st, 2019. nightwoodtheatre.net

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. nativeearth.ca



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