



**WEESAGEECHAK
BEGINS TO DANCE 35**

Annual Development Festival of New Indigenous Work
NOVEMBER 10 - 20, 2022

WELCOME TO THE 35TH ANNUAL WEESAGEECHAK BEGINS TO DANCE

MESSAGE FROM THE INTERIM ARTISTIC DIRECTOR & MANAGING DIRECTOR

Native Earth Performing Arts began as a project-based company, performing at the Theatre Centre and the Native Canadian Centre, as well as touring to reserves and smaller communities. The very first Weesageechak Begins to Dance festival began in 1989. There were a couple of times that the festival took place twice in one year, which brings us to 2022, our 35th annual festival!

Aki Studio has been our home for a decade, where we have hosted and will continue to host the Weesageechak Begins to Dance festival. This year feels particularly special, as we can gather in-person and kick off our 40th year as a company together. If recent years have taught us anything, it's the importance of the arts and why we must continue to do this work. Through the festival, we strive to provide opportunities for professional development and kinship, listening to what our artists want and need, and doing our best to showcase their work. Many Indigenous works and artists from across Turtle Island have had their start at the festival - what a powerful gift of trust.

This year, we're supporting Indigenous artists across several mediums - theatre, dance, burlesque, music, even visual art. You will see work in various stages of development. We are thrilled to have presentations from emerging artists we are working with for the first time, while welcoming back artists whose work our audiences may already be familiar with. We continue to hold space for festival artists to imagine and reimagine what their work is, provide opportunities for them to engage and interact with fellow Indigenous creatives, and for audiences to share in the celebration. The hybrid model of this year's festival allows us to engage with artists and audiences across Turtle Island - we are so happy to see you.

We give thanks to the past and present festival artists and Native Earth staff, and to the audiences that take in the work - this would not happen without you. Miigwetch.

With gratitude,
Joelle Peters & Himanshu Sitlani

Native Earth Performing Arts and Aki Studio are situated on the traditional territory of many nations including the Anishinaabe, the Chippewa, the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation, the Haudenosaunee Confederacy, and the Wendat.

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NativeEarthPerformingArts



NativeEarth

#W35

#Weesageechak35

#Aki Studio

FESTIVAL SCHEDULE

THURSDAY 10 / 7:30 PM

Ne temikilis pal ne kuyut papalut
by Alexa Black

Medea's Masquerade
by Frances Koncan

23 Beds
by Celeste Sansregret

THURSDAY 10 / DIGITAL

Medea's Masquerade
by Frances Koncan

Indigenous Dance Panel
by Brian Solomon, Samantha Sutherland, Waawaate Fobister, moderated by Jeanette Kotowich

Animikiig means Thunderbird
with Yvette Nolan and Lindsay Lachance

FRIDAY 11 / 7:30 PM

Fallen Feather
by Jeremy Proulx

The Bridge
by Pesch Nepoose

SATURDAY 12 / 7:30 PM

IndigiBabes Burlesque: Not Your Sacred Objects
by Denise B. McLeod/ Madam Ode'miin Surprise

Music Performance
by Rebecca Hope

Music Performance
by Lacey Hill

WEDNESDAY 16 / 7:30 PM ANIMIKIIG NIGHT

A Day in the Life
with Danica Charlie

Superparamagnetism
by Caleigh Crow

As the Ice Floats by
by Montana Adams

To Go Home
by Jennifer Alicia Murrin

THURSDAY 17 / 7:30 PM

kaqwiŋci
by Samantha Sutherland

Kisiskâciwan
by Jeanette Kotowich

FRIDAY 18 / 7:30 PM

And Then They Came
by Cole Alvis

Kisiskâciwan
by Jeanette Kotowich

SUNDAY 20 / 7:30 PM

Transpositions
by Spy Dénomme-Welch with Catherine Magowan (Unsettled Scores)

**In-person festival performances
at Aki Studio are \$15
Online offerings are free**

Visit: nativeearth.ca/boxoffice

WEESAGEECHAK 35 FESTIVAL TEAM

Festival Co-Producing Team	LUCY COREN, RINCHEN DOLMA
Assistant Producer (Digital)	YAGO MESQUITA
Festival Stage Manager	JULIA HOWMAN
Festival Designer	BRYAN-CLIFFORD BATTY
Festival Head Technician	ALEXANDER MACKAY
Photographer	KAYTEE DALTON
Video Editor and Broadcast Designer	DANIEL ABRAHAMSON (STREAMSTAGE.LIVE)
Understudy	CHANIN LEE PAYEA

NATIVE EARTH STAFF

Interim Artistic Director	JOELLE PETERS
Managing Director	HIMANSHU SITLANI
Marketing Manager	ABBY HO
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Administrative Coordinator	KRISTEN FRANCIS
Animikiig Program Director	LINDSAY LACHANCE
Season Visual Artist	CHIEF LADY BIRD
Media Relations	DAMIEN NELSON



Native Earth Performing Arts is Canada's premiere professional Indigenous performing arts company. We are dedicated to sharing stories of the Indigenous experience in Canada through theatre, dance and multi-disciplinary arts.

For 40 years, we have led the creation of the Indigenous canon in Canada, and have developed the work of over two hundred Indigenous artists through Weesageechak Begins to Dance, our annual development festival of new contemporary Indigenous work.

For full festival history, visit www.nativeearth.ca/about/history/weesageechak.

THURSDAY NOVEMBER 10
7:30 PM | AKI STUDIO

Medea's Masquerade **by Frances Koncan**

Banished from her home by her tacky ex-husband, the sorceress Medea finds peace within the brick walls of a mysterious little castle on the prairie. After many years of isolation, she finally decides it's time to meet her neighbours and throw a party. Unfortunately, an uninvited guest in the form of a deadly plague called Red Death shows up, determined to ruin her plans.

Currently in development with Punctuate! Theatre's Pemmican Collective 2022/2023 and as part of Native Earth's 40 Seeds for 40 Seasons program. This project has received support from the Canada Council for the Arts and the Manitoba Arts Council.

This piece will be in-person as well as streamed online, available until the end of the festival, November 20, 2022.

Ne temikilis pal ne kuyut papalut **by Alexa Black**

"Ne Itemigilis Guyutpapalut" [Neh eeh-teeh-meeh-geeh-leeh gu-yoot-pah-pah-loot] is an ambitious interactive collection of tintype photographs that explores belonging, displacement, fragmentation, and wholeness within colonial contexts. It is informed by traditional cartomancy, the Nahuatl concept "Nepantla", and the intersectional feminist theory "kyriarchy". Cartomancy is a symbolic card-based practice of divination, or seeking knowledge about the past/present/future (eg. tarot); Nepantla, as conceptualized by Gloria Anzaldua, is the state of in-betweenness experienced by displaced peoples; and Kyriarchy acknowledges imbalanced access to power in relationships. The three form the conceptual, visual, and engagement frameworks for this project.

The project aims to activate Nepantla (belonging for in-between, or fractured identities) and reflections on Kyriarchy (identity; power) through cartomancy. Divination, such as this cartomancy project, frames cycles of transformative sense-making that locate ourselves within dominant structures of meaning-making. These reflections on self and positionality in power structures build tolerance for contradiction such that nothing is rejected nor abandoned within the self. Here, we learn to love pieces of ourselves that we have sacrificed in order to fit into colonial standards of being. The significance of creating a deck is to sustain reflection, transformation, and integration of expanding worldviews. With a total of 78 images, this collection illustrates the expansiveness of consciousness and encourages humility in the discomfort of acknowledging one's positionality and roles in colonial contexts.

Sound Designer **Suzy King**

Development supported as part of Native Earth's 40 Seeds for 40 Seasons program.

THURSDAY NOVEMBER 10
7:30 PM | AKI STUDIO

23 Beds
by Celeste Sansregret

When her boss goes bankrupt and her roommate goes back to France, Sansregret decides to cut her biggest expense: an apartment. For 2 1/2 years, she inhabits the world of couch surfers, house sitters and vagabond performers with no fixed address. In a real estate obsessed society, what does it mean to be homeless?

Creator and Performer **Celeste Sansregret**
Mentor **Aria Evans**

Development supported as part of Native Earth's 40 Seeds for 40 Seasons program.

THURSDAY NOVEMBER 10
DIGITAL

Digital releases will be streamed online on November 10 at 7:30 PM ET and available to view until the end of the festival, November 20, 2022.

Indigenous Dance Panel
with Brian Solomon, Samantha Sutherland, Waawaate Fobister,
moderated by Jeanette Kotowich

Gathering in spaces created for us and by us is essential nourishment to our Spirit. This is a gathering of artistic kinship; a place to land, connect, laugh, and share what is current and relative in our creative practices. We will touch on themes of wellness, language, community, ceremony, embodiment, and storytelling in relationship to our dance practices and beyond.

Animikiig means Thunderbird
with Yvette Nolan and Lindsay Lachance

A look at where Animikiig Creators Unit began, and where it is now.

FRIDAY NOVEMBER 11
7:30 PM | AKI STUDIO

Fallen Feather
by Jeremy Proulx

"For years, the area of Thunder Bay/Binesii-wiikwedong and Fort William First Nation in northern Ontario have made national headlines for its years of colonial power, abuses, systemic racism and treatment of its Indigenous Peoples, especially the many displaced youth. Numerous First Nation children have been found dead or gone missing for decades within this traditional territory that many Anishinabek Peoples have called home for generations. The play was written in honour of those children who never made it home and whose bodies were found under suspicious pretenses. This play is also in honour of those families and communities who still live and reside within the area today who are still fighting for answers and justice for all of their children. Chi-Miigwetch."

Playwright **Jeremy Proulx**
Mentor **Lisa Nason**
Staging Director **Rinchen Dolma**
Actors **Trina Moyan, Celeste Sansregret, Jesse Wabegijig, James Dallas Smith**
Sound/Music Composition **Marc Meriläinen, James Dallas Smith**

Previously developed at the Banff Centre's 2022 Indigenous Playwrights Nest, with dramaturgical support from Deneh'Cho Thompson and Dr. Lindsay Lachance.

The Bridge
by Pesch Nepoose

The Bridge follows Kara, a young indigenous woman as she navigates through her life. Struggling through addiction, self harm, identity and family issues. Kara has to come to terms with her past to be able to move forward.

Creator and Performer **Pesch Nepoose**
Mentor **Katey Wattam**

Previously developed at Centre for Indigenous Theatre.

SATURDAY NOVEMBER 12
7:30 PM | AKI STUDIO

IndigiBabes Burlesque: Not Your Sacred Objects **by Denise B. McLeod/ Madam Ode'miin Surprise**

The IndigiBabes are a Toronto based burlesque collective made up of Indigenous artists, activists and aunties interested in empowering themselves and their communities, by challenging the dominate culture narratives of Indigenous 2 Spirit, Trans and Cis Women.

Through performances, community outreach, and shared knowledge, IndigiBabes Burlesque's vision is to create safer spaces for Indigenous people to celebrate each other and participate in ceremony. The Indigibabes are about reclaiming Indigenous sexuality, sensuality, gender expression and storytelling through the art of Burlesque.

Creator and Performer **Denise B. McLeod/ Madam Ode'miin Surprise**
Performers **Krysta Williams, Kahsenniyo Kick, Red Wolf, Neno Freebird, Jennifer Alicia Murrin, Belle Jumelles**

Musical Performance by Rebecca Hope

Rebecca Hope is Algonquin First Nations and Mixed Settler, as well as an award winning Singer-Songwriter and Guitarist. In 2019, she graduated from the University of British Columbia in English Literature and Creative Writing. She now resides in Toronto where she works as a performer for a booking agency and pursues her music career. She has won the Live Performance category of the Canadian Songwriting Competition, worked as an artist in residence for Buffy Sainte Marie and Toronto Metropolitan University, and performs regularly for performing arts festivals in Canada. Rebecca believes music is a tool to cope with life's ups and downs and openly shares her experiences with physical and mental health, overcoming trauma and heartbreak, and personal healing. Listening to her songs can help others feel less alone, and her incredible storytelling and raw vocals convey a sense of self and strength we can all learn from. Rebecca Hope inspires and empowers others to tell their truth, own their power, and chase their dreams.

Musical Performance by Lacey Hill

This Oneida/Mohawk Wolf Clan, Six Nations born and bred independent singer/songwriter describes her music as "Indigenous Soul" grown from a passion for making music since she was a little girl. Through the years Lacey paid her dues singing backup for local Six Nations bands like The Healers performing cover songs, and has established herself as one of only a few female musical talents to roll out album after original album from her community. There is no denying the amount of heart Lacey bleeds into each album; 528 Vol I in 2013, "M" released in 2017 available on iTunes, and 528 Vol II The Moon as her newest independent release October 2022. In between each album, Lacey makes a point of hitting the road with her music and continues to expand her fanbase not only locally but internationally with shows in Australia, Edinburgh, New York and central and western Canada.

SATURDAY NOVEMBER 12

IndigiBabes Burlesque: Not Your Sacred Object



Denise B. McLeod / Madam Ode'miin Surprise, Creator & Performer
Madam Odemiin Surprise! is a dream brought into reality as an act of reclamation and self love by creator Denise B. McLeod of IndigiBabes Burlesque.

Proud Urban 2 Spirit Anishinaabe Kwe, who's home territory is Sagamok Anishnawbek F.N located on the north shore of Lake Huron. Denise along with her comedy sisters founded Manifest Destiny's Child Comedy Collective in 2017. New to Burlesque, but not to the limelight, this mega babe has graced the cover of Now magazine's 2021 Love Your Body Issue. Having completed Belle Jumelles' Burlesque 101 class and Indigenous Women in Community Leadership at Coady Institute, Madam wanted to create space for other Indigenous babes to take to the stage and join her on her body reclamation journey. Her style of burlesque is a combination of sultry struts, impeccable musical timing, and a keen ear for a really good song. Give her a Follow on Instagram @db.mcleod because you don't want to miss what this artist has in store!



Krysta Williams, Performer
Bitch-tina Columbus is ready to fuck up colonial bullshit but is also very tired. Don't fuck with her before noon or face mayflower level destruction.



Kahsenniyo Kick, Performer
Miss Savage Moon hails from Six Nations. She brings love and softness to the stage in a wonderful display of Indigenous joy and pleasure.



Red Wolf, Performer
Red Wolf is a Queer/Two-Spirit multidisciplinary artist cumming from Where the Waters Divide, Bkejwanong Territory. They are on a journey to reawaken indigenous sensuality, sexuality, and ceremony surrounding body neutrality and reclamation.

IndigiBabes Burlesque: Not Your Sacred Object



Neno Freebird, Performer

Neno Freebird: No caged bird here!!! Fly by seduction with Neno Freebird. Be sure to bringing your towel for *wink wink* clean up.... It's bird bath time!



Jennifer Alicia Murrin, Performer

Jennifer Alicia Murrin (she/they) is a queer, mixed Mi'kmaw and settler (German/Irish/Scottish) multidisciplinary artist originally from Elmastukwek, Ktaqmkuk (Bay of Islands, Newfoundland), now residing in Toronto. She is a two-time national poetry slam champion and collective member of the Toronto Poetry Project and Seeds & Stardust. In 2021, her debut chapbook *Mixed Emotions* was released and she was also published in Issue 09 of *Canthius Magazine* and *NOW Magazine*. They presented their play with the working title *Restor(y)ing Identity* at the first ever Nogojiwanong Indigenous Fringe Festival in 2021. An audio version of the play was presented at the Weesageechak Begins To Dance 33 Festival in 2020 and at *imagineNATIVE Film + Media Arts Festival* in 2021. Jennifer Alicia recently edited an Indigenous poetry anthology called *The Condor and the Eagle Meet*, which was released in May 2022 through Kegedonce Press. Find out more about her work at: jenniferalicia.com.

Belle Jumelles, Performer

Belle Jumelles has been gracing stages across Canada for the last 13 years, and has become one of Toronto's most popular burlesque performers! She's a fierce, fabulous, fat, queer femme who instantly commands the room. Recently voted one of *Imperial Burlesque Canada's* top 5 Burlesque Emcee's, she's also a talented singer and producer. In addition to performing, Belle has spent the last 5 years teaching/mentoring some of the most up and coming burlesque performers in Toronto, and she is so honoured to have been able to mentor the Indigibabes on their incredible journey into burlesque!



REBECCA HOPE



Rebecca Hope is Algonquin First Nations and Mixed Settler, as well as an award winning Singer-Songwriter and Guitarist. In 2019, she graduated from the University of British Columbia in English Literature and Creative Writing. She now resides in Toronto where she works as a performer for a booking agency and pursues her music career. She has won the Live Performance category of the Canadian Songwriting Competition, worked as an artist in residence for Buffy Sainte Marie and Toronto Metropolitan University, and performs regularly for performing arts festivals in Canada. Rebecca believes music is a tool to cope with life's ups and downs and openly shares her experiences with physical and mental health, overcoming trauma and heartbreak, and personal healing. Listening to her songs can help others feel less alone, and her incredible storytelling and raw vocals convey a sense of self and strength we can all learn from. Rebecca Hope inspires and empowers others to tell their truth, own their power, and chase their dreams.

LACEY HILL



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ANIMIKIIG CREATORS UNIT

WEDNESDAY NOVEMBER 16
7:30 PM | AKI STUDIO & DIGITAL

This night will be a FREE-in person of Animikiig works in Aki Studio. It will be digitally released online, available to view until the end of the festival, November 20, 2022.

A Day in the life with Danica Charlie

Development supported as part of Native Earth's 40 Seeds for 40 Seasons program

Superparamagnetism **by Caleigh Crow**

A study of the earth's magnetic field over 481 years.

Creator and Performer **Caleigh Crow**
Mentor **Tara Beagan**
Actors **Nathan Howe, Joelle Peters, Cheyenne Scott**

Previously developed at Making Treaty 7 Cultural Society's Playwrights Unit.

As the Ice Floats By **by Montana Adams**

In 1899, Jake "Saiowisakeron" "Ice" Fire was shot in a struggle between a group of Mohawk men and the dominion police in the district of St. Regis in Akwesasne. This struggle was the culmination of over ten years of resistance from the Mohawk people against the Canadian government. In this piece, Jake Ice, his brother, and his wife pays us a visit through spirit and memory.

Content Warning: Police brutality, racism.

Creator and Performer **Montana Adams**
Mentor **Monique Mojica**
Actors **Ange Loft, James Dallas Smith, Yago Mesquita**

To Go Home **by Jennifer Alicia Murrin**

After living away in Toronto for years, a young Mi'kmaw woman must return home to the east coast for her Pop's funeral. This piece uncovers the importance of intergenerational knowledge transmission and what could happen if we forget to tell our stories.

Creator **Jennifer Alicia Murrin**
Mentor **Donna-Michelle St. Bernard**
Actors **Gordon Patrick-White, Lisa Cromarty, A. Merewyn Comeau**

Previously developed at the Banff Centre's 2022 Indigenous Playwrights Nest.

THURSDAY NOVEMBER 17
7:30 PM | AKI STUDIO

kaqwiłci

by Samantha Sutherland

kaqwiłci (gack-witl-see) was created as a way for Samantha to deepen her understanding of her native language, Ktunaxa. By translating Ktunaxa words into movement, she tells stories spoken by her elders and relatives. We follow her journey of learning a new language, and see the fear and empowerment that brings.

Creator and Performer **Samantha Sutherland**
Mentor **Aria Evans**

This piece was supported in its creation by the Paprika Festival, The Ontario Arts Council, and The National Ballet of Canada.

Kisiskâciwan

by Jeanette Kotowich

A creative return to the fast-flowing landscape of Saskatchewan, the robust and undulating land of my grandmothers' mothers and great-great grandfathers. Kisiskâciwan is a journey to one's self. Conceived and performed by Jeanette Kotowich, in collaboration with Indigenous and non-Indigenous artists, it speaks through dance to a Métis cultural narrative of identity, land and home.

Through memories of my childhood summer, embraced by the Kah-tep-was (Nêhiyaw for river that calls) valley, the vast prairie and gently rolling landscape has echoed its lasting impression and whispered a language of inspiration. Kah-tep-was is a two-kilometre wide, 180-metre deep valley is a sacred place that calls generations of peoples for gathering, hunting, and spiritual replenishment.

Choreographer, Performer, Producer **Jeanette Kotowich**

FULL PRODUCTION CREDITS

Creative Producer, Outside Eye **Deanna Peters/Mutable Subject**
Lighting **James Proudfoot** (lighting for Vancouver premiere and Montreal performances)
Sound Design **Kathleen Nisbet** (fiddle, vocals)
Sound **Wayne Lavalley, Moe Clark, Brady Marks**

Special Thanks to: Native Earth Performing Arts, Graham Kotowich, Lisa Gelley, Raina Von Waldenburg, Emily Solstice Tait, Stéphanie Cyr, Kelly McInnes, Jono Kim, Chengyan Boon, Sharai Mustatia

Past Mentors: Carlos Rivera, Michelle Olson, Charles Koroneho

This piece has been supported by Boca de Lupo, The Dance Centre, Shadbolt Centre for the Arts, Raven Spirit Dance, Art Holm, Morrow, Tangente, Tanzmesse International, Dance Saskatchewan Inc, Canada Council for the Arts

FRIDAY NOVEMBER 18
7:30 PM | AKI STUDIO

And Then They Came
by Cole Alvis

Inspired by the founding of the Métis nation, two siblings are tasked by their Onoshenyan (Auntie) to imagine the future. Joyful moments and battles transpire when they propose what will be.

Creator and Performer **Cole Alvis**
Mentor **Donna-Michelle St. Bernard**
Movement Facilitator **Jeanette Kotowich**
Actors **Tara Sky, Tavia Christina, Theresa Cutknife**

And Then They Came received development support from Native Earth's "40 Seeds for 40 Seasons" Program and the 35th Weesageechak Festival, as well as Prairie Theatre Exchange.

Kisiskâciwan
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This piece has been supported by Boca de Lupo, The Dance Centre, Shadbolt Centre for the Arts, Raven Spirit Dance, Art Holm, Morrow, Tangente, Tanzmesse International, Dance Saskatchewan Inc, Canada Council for the Arts

SUNDAY NOVEMBER 20
7:30 PM | AKI STUDIO

Transpositions
by Spy Dénommmé-Welch with Catherine Magowan
(Unsettled Scores)

Transpositions is a sonic exploration of the relationship between health and the environment. The work is written for viola, bass trombone/tuba and piano as part of Dr. Spy Dénommmé-Welch's self-directed residency with Native Earth Performing Arts, and performed under the musical direction of Catherine Magowan. An album recording of the work, produced by Unsettled Scores, will be released in 2023.

For more information, visit www.unsettledscores.com.

Creators and Musicians **Spy Dénommmé-Welch with Catherine Magowan**
Musicians **Christine (Cheon Gyeong) Bae, Alyssa Delbaere-Sawchuk, Justin McLean**

This piece has received support from the Canada Council for the Arts: Creating, Knowing and Sharing: the Arts and Cultures of First Nations, Inuit and Métis Peoples Program

ARTISTIC DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES



Now Open!

**RECOMMENDER GRANTS
FOR THEATRE CREATORS**

Deadline: January 10, 2023
nativeearth.ca/rgtc

Native Earth
Performing Arts

NATIVE EARTH GRATEFULLY ACKNOWLEDGES THE SUPPORT OF THESE GENEROUS INDIVIDUALS

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Make a lasting contribution to
Native Earth Performing Arts and Aki Studio.

Join us in creating new Indigenous art, developing new creators
and being a catalyst for Indigenous culture. What we do is made
possible by the generosity of donors like you.

Donate today to support the growth of Canada's
leading Indigenous performing arts company.

Visit www.nativeearth.ca/donate, or call us at 416-531-1402.

As a charitable organization, Native Earth issues tax receipts for all donations \$20 or over.
Charitable Registration # 119052116RR0001

FESTIVAL TEAM



Lucy Coren, Festival Co-Producer

Lucy Rose Coren is a theatre producer, creator and dramaturg. Lucy received her MA in Dramaturgy from the University of Kent in 2015. While living and working in the UK, she was Associate Dramaturg for Beyond Face Theatre Company, and Resident Dramaturg for Empty Deck. She has produced for Theatre Royal Plymouth, Pegasus Theatre and Tramshed Arts. She has been the Associate Producer for Factory Theatre since 2019 and is the Artistic Produce of programsound.fm. Lucy is the creator of Transfers, which was part of SummerWorks 2022 program, and It's a Shame, as part of Project: Humanity's Proximity Lab.



Rinchen Dolma, Festival Co-Producer

Rinchen Dolma originates from the Himalayas and is currently based in Tkarón:to. She is the founder and Artistic Director of MADE IN EXILE, a grassroots community-arts based initiative that engages young Tibetan creatives in exploring their complex identities through contemporary mediums of storytelling in exile. As an emerging performer, director, playwright, dramaturge and veteran community arts practitioner she is passionate about the intersections between art, labour and community. Rinchen recently participated in the 2019/20 Artist Producer's Training Program by Generator TO and Factory Theatre's 20/21 Foundry program—a new work creation group, where she has been developing a full-length play piece called "July 1st." She completed her 2020/21 Metcalf Foundation Performing Arts Internship in Artistic Direction under Marjorie Chan and is the recipient of the Cahoots Theatre 2021 Promising Pen Prize



Yago Mesquita, Associate Producer (Digital)

Yago Mesquita (he/him) is a queer Brazilian-Canadian theatre artist from Tkaronto. He is a playwright and writer, producer, performer, and director who has worked with theatre companies such as Aluna Theatre, Buddies in Bad Times Theatre, Factory Theatre, fu-GEN Theatre, New Harlem Productions, Open Heart Surgery Theatre, Paprika Festival, and more.

www.yagomesquita.com



Julia Howman, Festival Stage Manager

Julia Howman (she/her) is a multidisciplinary desinger, production manager, stage manager, and technician. Julia is a settler on Turtle Island, was raised in Doha, Qatar, and currently resides in Tkaronto.

Recent credits include: Production Design and Production Management, *The Chemical Valley Project* (Broadleaf Creations with The Great Canadian Theatre Company); Projection Design, *Distant Early Warning* (Pearle Harbour/Buddies in Bad Times Theatre); Head Technician, *Sweeney Todd* (Talk is Free Theatre); Production Management, *An IMM-Permanent Resident* (Nautanki Bazaar/Why Not Theatre)

FESTIVAL TEAM



Bryan-Clifford Batty, Festival Designer

B.C. Batty is a graduate of Humber College Production program, and has been a Technician, Stage Manager, Production Manager and Designer for numerous productions and events across Ontario for the past 15 years.

For the past six years he was the Venue Coordinator of Aki Studio with Native Earth Performing Arts. He has shared his skills and knowledge as mentor guest artist at Sheridan and Humber Colleges. He was the Program Coordinator for the Summer Workshop Series for Youth at The Edge of The Woods Festival. Recently he was the Production Manager for MTSpace's Impact Festival in 2021.



Alexander McKay, Festival Head Technician

Alexander Mackay is a rigging and lighting technician working in the film and live event industries. Having started his career as a theatrical lighting technician and designer, he then moved to primarily working as a rigger and electrician in the film industry. Whenever possible he loves the opportunity to step back into the theatre world and help create art and support the community. As Head Technician, he ensures that all technical aspects of the production are ready and that all required maintenance is performed before the shows begin. Alex loves the community and the relationships he has formed through theatre and looks forward to enjoying the festival and performances from the control booth. You'll find him at the lighting or sound console, trying not to get too distracted by the details.

Native Earth Performing Arts gratefully acknowledges the support of our funders and partners.

GOVERNMENT SUPPORT



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Native
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Single tickets for the 2022/23 season are sliding scale from \$10, \$20, \$30.
PWYC Tuesdays for select shows in the season.

FIREWATER THUNDERBIRD RISING

CONCEPT, CHOREOGRAPHY & PERFORMANCE BY
CHRISTINÉ FRIDAY

FEB 13 - 19, 2023

CHAPTER 21

CHOREOGRAPHED & PERFORMANCE BY
STARR MURANKO

MAR 20 - 26, 2023

NIIZH

WRITTEN BY JOELLE PETERS
DIRECTED BY DESIREE LEVERENZ

APR 11 - 30, 2023

AALAAPI

PRODUCED BY COLLECTIF AALAAPI

JUN 8 - 10, 2023

FIREWATER THUNDERBIRD RISING

CONCEPT, CHOREOGRAPHY & PERFORMANCE BY
CHRISTINE FRIDAY

FEB 13 - 19, 2023 | AKI STUDIO

Firewater Thunderbird Rising is the transformative spirit of dance travelling through dimensional realms of existence - ancestors, dreams, blood memory and the land directly connected to our Anishinaabek way of living, awakening the healing of our Nation's future.