

Death of a Chief

Drawing parallels between this classic tale of power and betrayal, and the lives of Native people in Canada today, *Death of a Chief* presents an array of intimate performances and discussions that include personal stories, dance, movement, and song.

The workshop is funded through the generous support of the University of Guelph, the Macdonald Stewart Art Centre, the College of Arts, the School of English and Theatre Studies, and the Canadian Adaptations of Shakespeare Project (CASP).



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Native Earth Performing Arts Inc.
www.nativeearth.ca

Shakespeare – Made in Canada
Festival
www.shakespearemadeincanada.ca

Canadian Adaptations of
Shakespeare (CASP)
www.canadianshakespeares.ca

Macdonald Stewart Art Centre
www.msac.ca

University of Guelph
www.uoguelph.ca

Death of a Chief

An adaptation of William Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar*

Presented by Native Earth Performing Arts
(Toronto)

co-adaptors/co-directors
Yvette Nolan & Kennedy Cathy MacKinnon



Workshops:

Wednesday, October 25, 2006

11:30 a.m.
Opening Remarks by Judith Thompson

4:00 p.m.
Opening Remarks by Kim Anderson



Ubiquitous. Pervasive. Everywhere.

"I think he [Shakespeare] is so woven into the consciousness of human beings that we keep returning to that text and those stories."

(quoted from an interview by the Canadian Adaptations of Shakespeare Project (CASP) with Yvette Nolan, March 2006)

A story that Nolan and co-adaptor/co-director Kennedy Cathy MacKinnon return to is *Julius Caesar* in their Shakespearean adaptation, *Death of a Chief*.

Death of a Chief operates on multiple levels as Nolan and MacKinnon rebuild and restructure the historic tragedy of *Julius Caesar* to address Aboriginal issues of politics, gender, class, race, and nation. For Nolan and MacKinnon adapting Shakespeare is about the process of understanding the complexities of community, ambition, power, betrayal, and the lives of Native people in Canada today. It is a process that reconfigures the matrix of political hierarchies to make leaders more accountable to the people.

Monique Mojica is an actor and published playwright. A veteran theatre artist and former Artistic Director of NEPA, she is 1/3 of the Turtle Gals Performance Ensemble co-founded with Jani Lauzon and Michelle St. John.

Michelle St. John is a two-time Gemini Award winning actor with experience in film, television, theatre, voice, and music. She is also Co-Artistic Director of the Turtle Gals Performance Ensemble and Producer/Host of Red Tales.

Cheri Maracle-Cardinal is an actor/singer/songwriter who has performed on stages in Canada and abroad for over a decade. Cheri is on the Advisory Board for Kanata Native Dance Theatre and sits on the Board for the Imagine Native Film Festival.

Clifford Cardinal first worked with Native Earth at the 2005 Rhubarb Festival playing Frank in *Freeman's Wake*, and again at the Harbourfront Centre festival presentation of *TransCanada*. Clifford lives in East York.

Sara Sinclair is a graduate of the American Academy of Dramatic Arts (NYC). With Native Earth, she has appeared in a number of readings, including *Frangipani Perfume* at Harbourfront's Planet Indigenous Festival. In New York City, she appeared in productions of *Savage in Limbo* and *The River Runs Through It*.

Falen Johnson is from the Six Nations Reserve. She is a recent graduate of George Brown Theatre School. Earlier this year, she participated in Native Earth's Weesageechak festival, as well as Nightwood Theatre's Groundswell festival. She also completed a workshop with Native Earth for an adaptation of *Julius Caesar*.

Michaela Washburn was born in Edmonton and received a Scholarship from The Second City's Training Centre and graduated from their Conservatory Program. She is also a member of the all-Native improvisational troupe Tonto's Nephews. Recently Michaela made her national debut as a host for Rez Bluez TV.

Waawaate Fobister is a recent graduate from the Theatre Performance Programme at Humber College. He was awarded the "Distinguished Performance Award" for his work in the Humber production season.

Jani Lauzon is a two-time Dora nominated actress, a three time Juno nominated singer/songwriter (with two independent recordings through her record company Ra Records), and the creator of several children's television puppet characters, including Grannie on *The Mr. Dress-Up Show*. She is also a co-founder of the Turtle Gals Performance Ensemble.

*Th'abuse of Greatnesse, is, when it
disjoynes // Remorse from power
(Julius Caesar 2.1.18)*

Co-adaptors / Co-directors

Kennedy Cathy MacKinnon is the Artistic Director of Shakespeare Link Canada. In August Kennedy traveled to Mozambique where she co-created and co-directed *The Africa Project: Dance with Us, Not with AIDS*. She is an actor, director, teacher, and stage manager. She teaches Shakespeare at Equity Showcase Theatre, George Brown and the Centre for Indigenous Theatre. She is a graduate from the Stratford Conservatory for Classical Theatre Training where she has also taught. She holds an MFA in Acting, a Diploma in Voice Teacher Training (York University) and a BFA in Acting (University of Windsor). www.shakespearelinkcanada.ca

Yvette Nolan is a playwright, director and dramaturg. Her plays include *BLADE*, *Job's Wife*, *Video*, and *Annie Mae's Movement*, which has been produced in Whitehorse, Winnipeg, Halifax, and Toronto. Directing credits include *Annie Mae's Movement* (Hardly Art/Native Earth), *The Unnatural and Accidental Women* by Marie Clements (Native Earth), and *The Triple Truth* (Turtle Gals). She is currently the Artistic Director of Native Earth Performing Arts in Toronto.

Opening Remarks

Judith Thompson, a University of Guelph faculty member since 1992, is a two-time winner of the Governor General's Literary Award for Drama for *The Other Side of the Dark* (1989) and *White Biting Dog* (1984), and was twice nominated for a Genie Award for her screenplays *Perfect Pie* and *Lost and Delirious*. She also received the Floyd S. Chalmers Canadian Play Award for *Lion in the Streets* (1991) and *I Am Yours* (1987). In 2005, she was named an officer of the Order of Canada for her outstanding contributions in arts and writing. Thompson's new play, *The Palace of the End*, consists of three monologues that capture the global effects of the Iraq War.

Kim Anderson is the author of *A Recognition of Being: Reconstructing Native Womanhood* (Sumach Press, 2000) and the co-editor with Bonita Lawrence of *Strong Women Stories: Native Vision and Community Survival* (Sumach Press, 2003). Anderson is currently a PhD Student in the Department of History at the University of Guelph, and works out of the Aboriginal Resource Centre on campus. In 2005, Anderson was awarded the Brock Scholarship, Guelph's largest and most prestigious doctoral award given to a PhD student.