

Immediate Release

Young People's Theatre Presents
FROZEN RIVER (nîkwatin sîpiy)

A Tale of Reconciliation Spanning Seven Generations

From Manitoba Theatre for Young People

Co-written by Michaela Washburn, Joelle Peters and Carrie Costello

Directed by Katie German

April 17–28, 2023

Ada Slight Stage

TORONTO, ON (March 29, 2023) – [Young People's Theatre \(YPT\)](#) is pleased to present [Frozen River \(nîkwatin sîpiy\)](#), a timely play from **Manitoba Theatre for Young People (MTYP)**. This award-winning production tells a story that spans seven generations, and explores themes of reconciliation, connection, and learning from those who have protected our waterways for centuries. A recipient of the Playwrights Guild of Canada's 2021 Sharon Enkin Plays for Young People Award, *Frozen River* is co-written by **Michaela Washburn, Joelle Peters** and **Carrie Costello**, and directed by **Katie German**. *Frozen River* is on the Ada Slight Stage from **April 17 to 28, 2023** and is recommended for ages 5 to 12.

In *Frozen River (nîkwatin sîpiy)*, Grandmother Moon tells the story of two eleven-year-olds, born under the same blood moon, but in different parts of the world. *Frozen River* follows their stories as they meet in a forest, and that of their descendants who meet in present day Manitoba. A broken promise from the past can be righted when there is finally an openness to learn from those who have honoured the waterways for generations.

"I was drawn to *Frozen River* because it is about relationships," says Director Katie German. "Relationships with each other, with the land and the water, and with ourselves. I hope that audiences leave the play talking about how their relationships are contributing to a better world for the generations after us."

Playwrights Washburn, Peters and Costello also hope that young audiences will be inspired to ask questions about how they can play active parts in ensuring the health and wellbeing of the environment and one another.

"These themes of reconciliation, as well as generational and environmental impact, are so important for our young (and older) audiences to examine," says Artistic Director **Herbie Barnes**. "It's a brilliant tale and we are so thrilled to present *Frozen River* at YPT this spring."

Frozen River features performances by **Julia Davis, Keely McPeck** and **Emily Meadows**.

Additional credits include: Assistant Director: **Julie Lumsden**; Set & Props Designer: **Andrew Moro**; Costume Designer: **Jay Havens**; Lighting Designer: **Dean Cowieson**; Composer & Sound Designer: **MJ Dandeneau**; Language Keeper: **Cameron Robertson**; Dialect Coach: **Rhea Rodych-Rasidescu**; Assistant Set Designer: **Shauna Jones**; Assistant Costume Designer: **Amy McPherson**; Stage Manager: **Julia Cirillo**.

YPT's 2022.23 season is proudly supported by **The Slight Family Foundation as Lead Donor**
and **BMO as Season Presenting Sponsor**.

Frozen River

(*nīkwatin sīpiy*)

Co-written by Michaela Washburn, Joelle Peters and Carrie Costello

Directed by Katie German

An MTYP Production

Originally directed by Ann Hodges and Tracey Nepinak

Performances:

Weekdays: April 18, 19, 20, 24, 25, 26 and 27 at 10:15AM & 1:00PM | April 17 at 1:00PM | April 28 at 10:15AM

Weekend: April 22 and 23 at 2:00PM

Relaxed Performances: April 23 at 2:00PM and April 24 at 10:15AM

Recommended for ages 5 to 12

Tickets:

Youth 1-18/Senior 65+: \$10 - \$34 (plus HST & service charges)

Adult 19+: \$10 - \$39 (plus HST & service charges)

Purchase Online: youngpeoplestheatre.org

Box Office: 416.862.2222

JULIA DAVIS as Grandmother Moon

Julia Davis (she/her) is an Inuk singer, actress, and composer currently residing in Winnipeg, Manitoba. She recently completed her second year of study with the Village Conservatory for Music Theatre, where she premiered her piece, *Aqqaq* (Northern Lights), at the year-end showcase. Julia also holds a Bachelor of Music (Vocal Performance) from the Desautels Faculty of Music at the University of Manitoba. She is actively involved in theatre performances, competitions and film projects around Winnipeg. Selected credits include *The Wizard of Oz* (Rainbow Stage); *SkyMed* (Paramount+); *Finality of Dusk*, *Burden of Truth* (Eagle Vision); and *The Yeomen of the Guard* (Gilbert and Sullivan Society of Winnipeg).

KEELY MCPEEK as Wâpam

Keely McPeck (she/her) has just graduated with a Post-Baccalaureate in vocal performance from the Desautels Faculty of Music at the University of Manitoba, from which she also holds a Bachelor of Music in vocal performance. During her time at the university, she also worked on and performed in multiple productions with the Black Hole Theatre Company. She won the 2020 Rainbow Stage Trophy a couple days before the world shut down, so you can probably blame her for that. While working on her Post-Baccalaureate, she explored her Oji-Cree heritage by taking courses in Indigenous Studies and performing a scene from the Canadian Indigenous opera *Missing* with the University of Manitoba Opera Theatre Ensemble. Her favorite past roles include Mrs. Lovett in scenes from *Sweeney Todd* and Beverley Bass in scenes from *Come From Away* with the University of Manitoba Musical Theatre Ensemble, as well as Clarice Starling in the Winnipeg Fringe production of *Silence! The Musical* (An Unauthorized Musical Parody of *Silence of the Lambs*). You may have seen her as an ensemble member in Dry Cold's recent production of *A Gentleman's Guide to Love and Murder*.

EMILY MEADOWS as Elidih

Emily Meadows is a Métis performer and creator, born and raised on Treaty One Territory. Credits throughout Canada include: *Into the Woods*, *Miss Bennet: Christmas at Pemberley* (Royal Manitoba Theatre Centre); *Gentleman's Guide...* (DryCold Productions); *Reefer Madness* (WST); *Stronger Together: Opening Doors to Mental Health* (Suitcase Theatre); *The Dream Catchers* (Charlottetown Festival Young Company/Eastern Canada tour); *We All Got Lost* (Hamilton Fringe); *The Last 48* (Winnipeg Fringe); the world premiere of *Senza Luce* (Theatre Sheridan); *Jo's Coat* (Rainbow Stage). Emily has trained at Toronto's Second City Conservatory Programme for Improv and Sketch Comedy, and holds an Honours Bachelor Degree in Music Theatre Performance from Sheridan. She is grateful to be one of the playwrights partaking in

Royal MTC's Pimootayowin Creator's Circle.

MICHAELA WASHBURN, Co-Playwright

Michaela Washburn (She/Her/They/Them) is a proud Métis artist of Cree, French, Irish and English descent. Now based in North Bay, she feels blessed to be grounded in ceremony and community-based arts in her work with Aanmitaagzi and Big Medicine Studio. An award-winning actor and writer, Michaela also has multiple nominations including the Ontario Arts Council Indigenous Arts Award, and the K.M. Hunter Artist Award for Theatre. Her work has been shared internationally at festivals and theatres in Wales, Aruba and across Canada and the United States. Michaela's practice spans theatre, film, television, writing, spoken word, clown, improvisation, hosting, workshop facilitation and stand-up. Proud to be continuing as an Artist in Residence with Necessary Angel Theatre Company and an Associate Artist with the Stratford Festival, Michaela is also honoured to currently be serving as a mentor with Royal Manitoba Theatre Centre's National Mentorship Program.

JOELLE PETERS, Co-Playwright

Joelle Peters is an Anishinaabe actor/playwright from Walpole Island First Nation in Southwestern Ontario. She is the Interim Artistic Director of Native Earth Performing Arts, and a graduate of Seneca College's Acting for Camera and Voice program. Selected theatre credits: *Embodying Power and Place* (New Harlem/Native Earth/ Nightwood); *Mistatim* (Red Sky Performance); *The Election* (Nightwood/Theatre Direct/Common Boots/Theatre Passe Muraille); *Two Odysseys: Pimootewin* (Signal/Soundstreams); *Women of the Fur Trade* (Toronto Fringe). Selected film/TV credits: *Shoresy* (Crave/Hulu); *In Her City* (Raven West Films). In 2020, Joelle was selected as the Siminovitch Prize Protégée by her mentor and dear friend Tara Beagan. Joelle's plays include *Niizh* (developed in Native Earth's Animikiig Creator's Unit and commissioned by the Blyth Festival); and *Do you remember?* (an audio play commissioned by Burnt Thicket Theatre, supported by the Pemmican Collective & Punctuate! Theatre Playwrights' Unit). She has also written a short film called *Where Would You Go?*, which was commissioned by Bad Hats Theatre.

CARRIE COSTELLO, Co-Playwright

Carrie Costello loves adapting stories into theatre for young audiences. She is often inspired by a book or a historical event and then figures out the theatrical way in. She has adapted seven children's books into plays for various ages, including *The Paper Bag Princess*, *The Velveteen Rabbit*, *The Snail and the Whale*, and *There's a Mouse in My House*. The latter was produced by Carousel Players in 2009 and toured Niagara schools. In 2010 the play was remounted and brought to Young People's Theatre and Theatre Direct in Toronto. Carrie's next play, *Water Under the Bridge*, was her first historically-inspired work, which she co-wrote with Michaela Washburn. This play was produced in 2012 and toured for two years throughout Southern Ontario, Quebec and Saskatchewan. Carrie's most recent project *Torn Through Time*, co-written with Frances Koncan and Cherissa Richards, was about forgotten Canadian female heroines and was produced by MTYP in 2019. She is so grateful to finally see *Frozen River* come to life.

KATIE GERMAN, Director

Katie German is a Métis director, performer, educator and mother. Born and raised in Winnipeg, Manitoba, Katie is currently the owner and director of Junior Musical Theatre Company (JMTTC), the Assistant Program Director of Pimootayowin Creators Circle with the Royal Manitoba Theatre Centre, an Artistic Consultant with Manitoba Theatre for Young People (MTYP), and a Directing Fellow with the ThisGen Mentorship through Why Not Theatre. Katie is so incredibly grateful to be re-discovering this piece with all of the talented artists working on it, honouring the past work, and bearing witness to the future. Recent performance and directing credits include: *The Hockey Sweater*, *Breaking Up Is Hard to Do* (Rainbow Stage); *The Rez Sisters* (Royal Manitoba Theatre Centre); *Midwinter Mosey*, *A Year with Frog and Toad*, *Seussical: The Musical* (MTYP); *Embodying Power and Place Digital Presentation & Workshop* (Director - New Harlem Productions, Nightwood Theatre & Native Earth Performing Arts); *Winn nipi* (Director - Prairie Theatre Exchange); *The (Post) Mistress* (Assistant Director - RMTTC); Canadian Premiere of *Tuck Everlasting* (Director - Junior Musical Theatre Company); *Wolf Joe Cartoon* (Voice Director & Character Voice - Media Rendezvous & Amberwood Entertainment); *South Pacific* (Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra); *Pippen Reimagined* and *American Idiot* (Winnipeg Studio Theatre).

JULIE LUMSDEN, Assistant Director

Julie Lumsden is a proud member of the Manitoba Métis Federation, with Scottish and German settler ancestry. She

holds a Bachelor of Music in Classical Voice Performance from the University of Manitoba Desautels Faculty of Music. She recently completed her fourth season at the Shaw Festival, most notably as Bella in *Gaslight* - being heralded as “luminous” (*The Globe & Mail*), “particularly compelling” (*The New York Times*) and giving a “tour de force performance” (*Broadway World*). She has also performed on such stages as: Royal Manitoba Theatre Centre, Prairie Theatre Exchange, MTYP, Rainbow Stage, Théâtre Cercle Molière, Magnus Theatre and Neptune Theatre. She is a Juno Award nominee for her work with Against the Grain/The Banff Centre’s *Messiah/Complex*.

About Young People’s Theatre

Young People’s Theatre (YPT) has launched the next stage in the company’s 57-year history, co-led by Artistic Director Herbie Barnes and Executive Director Nancy Webster. This new era also marks the unveiling of YPT’s expanded and renovated theatre complex, more than 10 years in the making. As Canada’s largest and oldest professional theatre for young audiences, the company produces and presents a full season of theatre and arts education programming, serving approximately 150,000 patrons annually. With the purchase of a multi-use building across the street from its historic theatre, YPT 161 Studios, YPT has expanded its footprint, increased its accessibility, refreshed its lobbies, and upgraded the theatrical equipment capabilities of its 450-seat Ada Slaight Stage and 115-seat Studio. United in vision, the two facilities now anchor the corner of Front and Frederick Streets in downtown Toronto creating Canada’s largest theatre complex for young people. [Learn more](#).

About Manitoba Theatre for Young People (MTYP)

Located in Winnipeg, Manitoba Theatre for Young People has been creating and presenting professional theatre productions for children and families since 1982. Each season, MTYP presents touring companies from around the world, as well as contributes to the repertoire of Canadian theatre through the creation and development of new work. In addition to its mainstage season and touring activities, MTYP delivers theatre-in-education programs, and operates a Theatre School. [Learn more](#).

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Connect with Young People’s Theatre



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