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Message from the Chair, Board of Trustees

I'm delighted to welcome you to this momentous occasion as we experience this exciting new opera: Li Keur: Riel’s Heart of the North. Li Keur is far more than an opera; it represents an act in the process of reconciliation. This work is a testament to the power of artistic collaboration; bringing together diverse voices, languages, and traditions to celebrate Métis culture and heritage. It exemplifies how art can foster understanding and healing.

Manitoba Opera is immensely grateful to present the first Indigenous-led opera on a Canadian mainstage, featuring an outstanding creative team of Métis artists, storytellers, and performers.

Congratulations to the creative team, Dr. Suzanne Steele, Alex Kusturok, and Neil Weisensel, whose vision, creativity, and indeed, perseverance, has made this work possible. Our deepest gratitude goes to the language keepers and translators, who have worked on this project from its start, translating text into the Indigenous languages, offering cultural knowledge and wisdom, and assisting the performers with pronunciation.

I must also express our gratitude to the Li Keur Advisory Committee that has worked tirelessly to guide community engagement and build bridges with the Indigenous community. The efforts of this committee have been instrumental in bringing this vision to life, and we are thankful for your dedication, knowledge, and passion.

On behalf of the entire organization, I want to give our thanks to BMO for their extraordinary support in underwriting Li Keur: Riel’s Heart of the North, in addition to their support as our 2023/24 Presenting Season Sponsor. BMO’s commitment to this project is nothing short of remarkable, and it has enabled us to realize this ambitious endeavor. Li Keur is a celebration of Métis culture, a tribute to language reclamation, and a testament to the power of intercultural exchange. It is a story that resonates not only with Manitobans, but with all Canadians, for it is a part of our shared history. As we embark on this journey, I encourage you to immerse yourselves in the mystic power of Li Keur. Let it be a symbol of hope, unity, and reconciliation. Let it inspire you to learn and engage with Indigenous cultures, languages, and traditions. Let it be a testament to the transformative power of the arts.

Thank you for joining us this evening, I know it will be a night to remember.

With gratitude and anticipation,

Judith Chambers
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At BMO, we take pride in our local communities, and the artists that contribute to the cultural diversity and creative richness of our cities.

BMO is proud to be Manitoba Opera’s 2023/24 Season Sponsor and Lead Underwriter of Li Keur: Riel’s Heart of the North.
Peehtikway, Aaniin, Boozhoo, Tawow, Wotziye, Iyuskin, Tungasugit, Bienvenue, Welcome.

Manitoba Opera’s path to bring Li Keur: Riel’s Heart of the North to the stage began in 2019. With our Building Bridges initiative, we aimed to build meaningful relationships with Indigenous communities through a guided process of listening and learning.

Our journey began with Jessica Dumas, a member of the Anishinaabe community from Keeseekoowenin Ojibway First Nation, who led educational workshops for Manitoba Opera’s board and staff. We participated in the Kairos blanket exercise and a session on the painful legacy of residential schools. Elder Betty Ross graciously shared her life story with us following a smudging ceremony, and we also read her book, Sugar Falls, and engaged in a workshop on the history of treaties in Canada.

When the pandemic struck, our staff and board began self-guided learning sessions online. These sessions included discussions about the Truth and Reconciliation Commission’s 94 Calls to Action and readings of works like Bob Joseph’s 21 Things You May Not Know About the Indian Act and Indigenous Relations. Our team participated in webinars on the impact of colonization and historical trauma on fundraising, Indigenous musical sovereignty, Indigenous perspectives on fundraising, and historical music and Indigenous resurgence.

In 2022, we hired consultant Rhonda Forgues of Spirited Way Consulting to resume the Building Bridges project. Over a number of months, Rhonda met with us to learn about our organization. She developed recommendations for the company to restructure processes to incorporate the skills and representation of Indigenous communities; to formulate an HR recruitment strategy to enhance Indigenous representation throughout the company; and to prioritize partnerships with Indigenous-owned businesses and artists.

This transformative work, already in motion, will be further formalized when Manitoba Opera signs the Winnipeg Indigenous Accord this month.

Over the past several months, staff have worked with an advisory committee to guide our connections to the community in relation to Li Keur: Riel’s Heart of the North. We extend our profound gratitude to all the Indigenous people who have worked with us for their wisdom, generosity of spirit, and kindness.

Our journey has been a rewarding experience, culminating in tonight’s celebration as we launch a new opera that celebrates Métis women, languages, and culture. As this evening begins, the words of Louis Riel resonate: “My people will sleep for one hundred years, but when they awake, it will be the artists who give them their spirit back.”

Tonight is witness to that spirit.

Larry Desrochers
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I did not write *Li Keur: Riel’s Heart of the North*. The land wrote this, as did the swallows (*les hirondelles*), the dragonflies of the Missouri River at Point Pelican, and St. Peters, Montana, where Riel taught. And I had the help of hundreds of peoples of the land that I encountered over tens of thousands of kilometres spent travelling first by water: 2,200 km of the North Saskatchewan from the Rockies to Lake Winnipeg on a 17’ sailboat and 10,000 km by road, off-grid, throughout the heart, *li keur* of this great continent.

Over those years I met some of our Elders, the keepers of the Indigenous flames, our knowledges, all of whom helped me: John and Vicki Arcand, Rose Richardson (the model for Marie Serpent) and the late Ric Richardson, Maria Campbell (whom I met briefly at the Arcands’ but whose words I have thought long about) and so many, many more. And the amazing young ones helped me: Métis fiddler and activist Tristen Durocher, the young fiddler Jordan Daniels (who is doing us all so proud). Then too, I received the good counsel of a great friend to us (I detest the word ‘ally’ which I find performative), the late Dr. Nicholas Vrooman, whose work with and on behalf of the Métis peoples, the Littleshell Chippewa of Montana, has, after 140 years of Littleshell’s petitioning the US government for recognition, at last succeeded.

Vrooman, upon hearing of my writing *Li Keur*, rightfully acknowledged that “this is your story to write.” Did I need the blessing of a non-Indigenous historian? No. But it was kismet that we should meet at the beginning of my research; he was a good friend to our peoples south of the Medicine Line and he confirmed my historical assumptions in this piece. I’m sorry he never lived to see *Li Keur*.

At the time of these travels, I did not know what I was looking for; I waited patiently for the land to tell me, for the archives, for Riel’s diaries to tell me, for the hundreds of conversations that I had with our peoples from all walks of life to tell me. And what they told me was to write some of us back into the narrative of the continent, a narrative that in my family stretches back 12,000 years (at least).

*Continued on page 11*
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As a Gaudry/Fayant/Ducharme of St. Vital, St. François Xavier, and Willowbunch, our family was cast like windflower seeds to the winds of diaspora into the western continent; we were exiles in our own land. A once-thriving family, through the loss of financial and social capital, suffered severe poverty and dismembered family ties. It is through *Li Keur*, then, that I reconnect some of this loss, not the least through the presence of the ghost-choruses of the opening ‘becoming’ story, and most of all through the Indigenous languages.

For me, the most exciting aspect of this work is to hear some of the sonic palette of the time in which my great-great-grandparents and their kin spoke five to seven languages, a time in which French and English were not the *lingua francas* of the continent. For this I will always be grateful to our translators for helping me, and I take full responsibility for any errors or omissions and beg their forgiveness in my attempt to write the linguistic accommodations of the times, accommodations one might still hear in a Michif household over *li galette* and tea!

I thank *li famille*, my big family for support, and Jeff Hilberry who has abided with me, Nicole Stonyk who has been by my side through some thick and thin, Virginia Durksen for her editor’s eye, Bryna Link and Hannah Connelly, Simon Miron, Neil Weisensel, Alex Kusturok, Larry Desrochers and SO MANY more. I apologize for missing names.

I thank the Creator for the miracle of medicine and good doctors that saved my life in 2021/22 and dedicate this work to my grandmother, the late Joséphine Marie Gaudry; my mother, the late Eileen Mae; my late niece, Courtenay Jane; and most of all I dedicate this to my traditional Métis fiddler daughter, Ella Joséphine Marie, who may or may not bear any resemblance to the Joséphine-Marie of *Li Keur*! Maarsi.

**Notes from Dr. Suzanne M. Steele**

**Opera Architect/Librettist/Storyteller CONTINUED**

Suzanne Steele is an award-winning poet, installation artist, scholar, editor, and writer. She is a librettist (opera architect) and co-founder, with Drs. Monique Giroux and Michelle Porter, of the Red River Jig Network project (www.redriverjig.com).

Dr. Steele has a PhD from Exeter University (UK), an MLIS from UWO, and a BMus (voice) from UBC. She is co-director of the multi-year *Li Keur* project with Neil Weisensel.

Her war requiem (with composer Jeff Ryan), *Afghanistan: Requiem for a Generation*, will be released commercially in 2023. This work is based on her experience as a Canadian war artist with the First Battalion Princess Patricia’s Canadian Light Infantry (2008-2010) Afghanistan.

She is represented by Ian Arnold of Catalyst Ian@catalysttcm.com and would like to thank him.
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Notes & Biography
Alex Kusturok
Co-composer/Fiddle

Growing up, Alex followed his mother Patti to old-time dances around Manitoba where he was enriched with the Métis fiddle from a young age.

His career highlights include travelling with the Métis delegation to Rome to meet with Pope Francis, Celtic Colours International Festival, Heritage Classic in Edmonton, Alberta, and two top-three finishes at the Canadian Grand Masters.

“I’m very honoured to be part of this production. The ability to preserve our culture like this is such a gift. Congratulations to everyone involved.”

Notes from Neil Weisensel
Co-composer/Conductor

Composing music for *Li Keur* has been the most rewarding and the most challenging thing I have ever done. The scale, scope, and breadth of the creation of this piece is something that is difficult to put into words. Co-composed with my friend and colleague Alex Kusturok, the music weaves many musical disciplines: traditional and contemporary fiddle tunes, contemporary opera music, well-known operatic tropes that retain their effectiveness, and the kinds of teeming, swirling textures that a symphony orchestra as committed to new music as the WSO can provide.

My compositional esthetic, while fairly traditional in many ways, tries to reflect the inner state of the characters. For example, when things are going well in Riel’s life, his music is beautiful and lyrical; when he is undergoing challenges, his music becomes dissonant and discordant.

I’m very grateful to Suzanne Steele for putting together a compelling, dramatic, and epic story that I could help tell using music. We are very fortunate to have as stage director Simon Miron (a cousin on my French-Canadian side), a quadruple-threat artist who helped shape the story as dramaturge, and has pulled together the visions of so many artists into what you see onstage tonight. It’s also been a great pleasure to work with video and set/prop designer T. Erin Gruber and choreographer Yvonne Chartrand, two of the other artists whose work features prominently in *Li Keur*.

I also would like to thank Canadian Mennonite University (CMU) who, through my position as Music Faculty there, made it possible for this project to apply for and be awarded a SSHRC grant, which funded the Indigenous Languages Database, a bedrock for the piece. CMU’s Internal Grants provided funding for the recording of excerpts and publishing the score, which were invaluable for keeping the project’s momentum.

The work on this project started in 2017, the result of a Canada Council New Chapter grant that was awarded to Suzanne and me as part of Canada’s 150th anniversary of Confederation. What followed was a voyage of discovery and healing that took me from the heart of the Métis homeland in Manitoba through Saskatchewan, Alberta, Montana, and the Dakotas.

*Continued on page 15*
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Composer and conductor Neil Weisensel, one of the most frequently performed and prolific opera composers in Canada, is a white settler with French-Canadian and German ancestry. Neil is part of the music faculty at Canadian Mennonite University, where he teaches Music Theory, Composition, and Music Technology.

As a composer he is well-versed in a multiplicity of styles and genres and has written music for feature films, television, documentaries, and international multi-media installations. Neil’s eight operas, including four early works with librettist/director Michael Cavanagh that remain in the repertory, have seen over 200 total performances across Canada and the U.S., including Vancouver Opera’s 2014 production of *Stickboy*, with libretto by slam poet Shane Koyczan. More recently, in 2017, Winnipeg’s Little Opera Company produced his 1997 opera *Merry Christmas Stephen Leacock*, proving that you need to be very patient as an opera composer!

A first performance of 45 minutes from the piece, with the Regina Symphony conducted by Gordon Gerrard in 2019, was seminal in the development of the current version. Subsequent performances planned with the Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra in 2020, 2021 and 2022 were derailed by the pandemic, after which Larry Desrochers and Manitoba Opera came to the rescue and made the current production possible, for which I will be eternally grateful.

As a white settler, I feel it is my responsibility to do what I can to contribute to the tremendous process of reconciliation in which our country is engaged. Through working on this piece, I have learned so much about myself, about Indigenous worldview, culture and practices, and have made so many new friends along this journey. This project has affected the work I do as an educator at Canadian Mennonite University, it has affected my politics, and my family life. What lies before us all is an opportunity to change Canada’s narrative by becoming actively involved in reconciliation, by becoming allies, finding other allies, and extending our love, friendship, understanding, and collaboration to Indigenous communities. It takes all of us to walk the journey of reconciliation together as treaty people.

With his wife, Rachel Landrecht, Neil co-composed and performed an original song for former U.S. President Bill Clinton in Vancouver, and the duo has also provided keynote musical presentations for Oscar winner Al Gore and Prime Minister Justin Trudeau. Neil had an exclusive engagement performing solo piano at the Vancouver 2010 Olympics, and his big band collaboration with superstar Michael Bublé earned them multiple award nominations. In fall 2022, virtuoso organist Sarah Svendsen premiered Neil’s new composition *Tableaux* at Toronto’s Roy Thomson Hall.

Neil has received grants, fellowships, and commissions from the National Endowment for the Arts (U.S.), the Canada Council, Opera.ca, the Manitoba, Winnipeg, and BC Arts Councils, OPERA America, and the Banff Centre. He holds advanced music degrees from UBC (Composition) and from the University of Manitoba (Piano Performance).
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Nikki Einfeld (Adele), Die Fledermaus, 2006. Photo: R. Tinker
This work is entirely of my imagination and cannot be construed as an historic account despite a foundation of extensive primary archival and secondary research of the 19th century, extensive engagement with the land, with the Michif peoples, and our kinship networks of the 21st century throughout our homeland. Any mistakes or omissions are entirely mine. Any linguistic mistakes are entirely mine. – SUZANNE STEELE

Li Keur is an invitation to visit. It is almost winter, a time when stories stalk the earth. In dreamlike sequences, Joséphine-Marie, and her beloved grandmother Mémère tell us a favourite family story, one told to give comfort in troubled times.

The story imagines the becoming of the Métis peoples and introduces a mystical, historic past that exists in the present in the form of ‘ghost’ or ‘ancestor’ choruses. Thus, Joséphine-Marie and her family situate themselves at the heart of the continent as Métis peoples.

The opening act introduces us to the Black Geese of Fate, agents of change and the main protagonists; the Anishinaabeg knowledge keeper, Marie Serpente; Josette, a young Michif sharpshooter and runaway; Marguerite Monet dit Belhumeur; and the historic Louis Riel living out his fate. We also meet Baptiste Robideau, a buffalo guide who may or may not be the younger Riel.

We then transition from the mystic to “reality” as Joséphine-Marie is startled awake from her story-dream into the present. Far from home, she struggles with her studies and sense of identity until she is visited by her darling Mémère who helps her navigate this difficult time through more story, this time of a young woman sharpshooter of the 1870s at the last bison hunts and her love for a buffalo guide named Baptiste Robideau.

The story within a story begins in the 1870s Red River at a dance. We learn Josette is being bargained over by her father, Pierre LaGrande to an old trader, Jacques LaCrosse, who wants her in marriage. Josette, an independent spirit, refuses to be a part of this, switches clothing with her best friend Rose, and runs away south across the Medicine Line (the US/Canada border) with Robideau, who has been hired to take a wealthy English aristocrat to the last bison hunts.

Joining them are Marie Serpente, a dear friend of Josette’s from childhood, and LaRoche, a Canadjenn (Quebecois), Marie’s love partner and Robideau’s guide partner. The quartet journey to St. Paul, fetch their Englishman, then meet the buffalo hunts of Pembina and Île-à-la-Crosse. Marie and Josette babysit the Englishman while Robideau and LaRoche come and go over the Medicine Line to do “business.”

Over the course of the opera, we encounter bison brigades, smugglers, attend kitchen parties filled with jiggers and fiddlers, and take in a boxing match!

Overarching narratives encompass 21st century Joséphine-Marie’s reckoning with identity, 1885 Riel’s historic reckoning with his fate as he sits in his jail cell playing crib with his jailers, and a love triangle. All the while, the Black Geese of Fate manipulate, play with, or torment every character, including us!

In the final act, we come to the ‘historic’ Riel and face the terrible challenges of the 1880s for Indigenous peoples at the heart of the continent, themes 21st century peoples will recognize: refugeehood, environmental degradation, political insecurities, and much more.

But this work is meant first and foremost as a celebration of the independence and fortitude of the Métis peoples and our kinship networks at li keur, the heart of the continent, and in particular, how Indigenous women have sewn and mended our cultures and our challenges – traits that Joséphine-Marie will take with her well into the 21st century as she prepares for her own leadership guided by stories of Josette, Mémère, Riel, and the Black Geese of Fate!
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Soprano Katherine Mayba leads a BEEP workshop at Victory School, 2022. Photo Jagriti Aggarwal
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Simon Miron*

Director

Simon Miron is a two-spirited, francophone Métis, multidisciplinary artist from Treaty One Territory. Their ancestry includes the Ladéroute, Pontbriand, and Sansregret families. They are interested in making weird art that encourages growth and challenges the boundaries of their own theatre practices. They hold a master’s degree from the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland and also studied in Edmonton, Toronto, and The Stratford Festival. They are a founding member of the Village Conservatory for Music Theatre, a local performing arts education program. www.villageconservatory.com

Directing credits include The Post Mistress (RMTC/Belfry), Pippin (ViC/WST), American Idiot, Young Frankenstein (WST), Lucky Stiff (MDA), The Seat Next to the King, Whatever Happens After, The Last 48, Songs for a New World, 7 Stories, The Last Five Years (WPGfringe). Simon will be directing RMTC’s production of The Piano Teacher this February.

Rebecca Cuddy*

Josette La Grande

Métis mezzo-soprano Rebecca Cuddy is acknowledged as “the next generation who are going to do incredible things” (The Whole Note, 2019).

This season Rebecca will appear with Soundstreams, the Toronto Symphony Orchestra, Symphony New Brunswick, and as a member of The IndigiDivas with Allegra Chamber Orchestra and Calgary Philharmonic. She will also premiere Bulrush with West Edge Opera in Cincinnati.

Last season, Rebecca returned to Pacific Opera Victoria for Braunfels’ Die Vögel. In concert she appeared with Soundstreams (premiere - Frehner’s L.E.X.), the New Orford String Quartet, the Toronto Consort, and performed with members of the Toronto Symphony Orchestra, Jeremy Dutcher and Yo-Yo Ma in support of Toronto’s CAMH Centre.

Rebecca attended Western University and the Royal Academy of Music for voice studies. She is the 2022 graduate of the Indigenous Artist Residency at the National Theatre School of Canada. www.rebeccacuddy.com

Paulette Duguay*

Mémère

Born and raised in St. Boniface, Manitoba, Paulette comes from a long line of proud French Red River Métis from her mother’s side and a French-Canadian paternal background.

Theatre has always been an integral part of her life and she’s enjoyed being in the cast of several productions with Théâtre Cercle Molière, Maison Gabrielle-Roy, and special event productions.

Paulette holds the Métis nation close to her heart and devotes much of her time as president of l’Union nationale métisse Saint-Joseph du Manitoba, the oldest Métis organization in the country dating back to 1887.

She is also a grateful mother of five and a Mamie to 10 grandchildren. Fun fact: Paulette’s great grandmother, Eulalie, was Louis Riel’s sister.

Nolan Kehler*

La Roche

Treaty One-based tenor Nolan Kehler brings an infectious energy to the stage. Equally at home on both the concert and operatic stages, Nolan recently made his American debuts with American Bach Soloists and Emmanuel Music in Boston.

A performer dedicated to collaborative reconciliation, Nolan has had the pleasure of working with Juno-nominated Cree composer Andrew Balfour on his compositions Captive and Nôtinikêw last year in performances with Winnipeg’s Dead of Winter at the Montreal New Music Festival and with Edmonton’s Chronos Vocal Ensemble.

Nolan serves as provincial coordinator for the Manitoba chapter of Opera InReach, an organization which provides accessible opera education to schools from a wide variety of perspectives and backgrounds in Canadian vocal music.

Nolan can also be heard on weekends over the airwaves on CBC Radio One introducing curated classical music selections across Canada.
Evan Korbut*  
**Riel/Robideau**


He began studying at Western University in 2007, completed his Bachelor’s Degree in Music (voice performance) in 2011 and completed his Master’s Degree in Music (voice) in 2014.

Recent credits include *The Ecstasy of Rita Joe* (Jaimie Paul, world premiere), *Rise and Fall of the City of Mahagonny* (Moses), *Shanawdithit* (Simms/Spirit Chorus, world premiere), *Two Odysseys: Pimooteewin/Gállábártnit* (Hunter/Chorus, world premiere), *The Flight of the Hummingbird* (Owl), *Adriana Lecouvreur* (Michonnet), *Missing* (Angus/Native Student), and *Don Giovanni* (Leporello).

Evan is excited to be singing the roles of Riel and Robideau.

Michelle Lafferty*  
**Black Goose #1**

Dora Award winner mezzo-soprano Michelle Lafferty is from Tłichó Nation Northwest Territories and now resides in Calgary, Alberta.

She is involved, on an ongoing basis, with The Banff Centre for the Performing Arts program *Indigenous Classical Musicians Gathering*, Calgary Opera’s Lab production of *Namwayut*, and Soundstreams production of *Two Odysseys Pimooteewin/Gállábártnit* in 2020.

In 2022, she performed in “Kisagee'tin,” a concert of Tomson Highway’s works with the National Arts Centre in Ottawa. She is also part of a new emerging group of illustrious Indigenous women “The Indigidivas” production, with financial support by Allegra Chamber Orchestra with Janna Sailor.

In January 2023, she had her American debut with the role of Mother in Brian Current and Marie Clements’ opera *Missing* with Anchorage Opera, Alaska. This past September, she performed with Unsettled Scores in their opera *Canoe* by Dr. Spy Dénommé-Welch and Catherine Magowan.

Photo credit: Ramsay Kunkel

Julie Lumsden*  
**Rose/Marguerite**

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 has just finished her fifth season at the Shaw Festival, starring as Louise/Gypsy Rose Lee in *Gypsy: A Musical Fable*. During her time at Shaw she has been heralded as “luminous” (*The Globe and Mail*), “particularly compelling” (*The New York Times*) and giving a “tour de force performance” (*Broadway World*).

Julie has also performed on stages including those of RMT, PTE, 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*.

Tonight’s performance is in honour of her grandfathers, Alden and Charles, who have blessed her with her most treasured gifts: the gift of song and the gift of community.

James McLennan  
**Jacques La Crosse/ The Englishman**

Born and raised in Winnipeg, James McLennan has performed on opera stages across Canada in a career spanning close to two decades. Highlights include Count Almaviva in *The Barber of Seville* with Edmonton Opera, Luther Bills in *South Pacific* with Calgary Opera, and Jeune Bilodeau in the world premiere of *Les Feluettes* with l’Opéra de Montréal and Pacific Opera Victoria.

Local appearances include Goro in *Madama Butterfly*, Bardolfo in *Falstaff* and Little Bat in *Susannah* at Manitoba Opera, Orphée in *Orphée et Eurydice* with Manitoba Underground Opera, and Handel’s *Messiah* with the Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra. Last year, he made his UK debut at London’s Southbank Centre in Soundstreams’ *Musik für das Ende*, a production directed by Chris Abraham featuring the music of Canadian composer Claude Vivier.

James has served as a vocal instructor at both the University of Manitoba and Brandon University. He is also a certified French translator.

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*The Artists*
The Artists

Keely McPeek*

Marie Serpente

Keely McPeek (she/her) is a member of the Oji-Cree Kitchenuhmaykoosib Inninuwug First Nation in Northwestern Ontario, with Irish and German settler roots. She holds a Bachelor of Music and Post-Baccalaureate in Vocal Performance from the Desautels Faculty of Music at the University of Manitoba.

Winning the Rainbow Stage Trophy at the Winnipeg Music Festival encouraged her stage performance career. You may have seen Keely in Manitoba Theatre for Young People's recent seven-month tour of Frozen River, Dry Cold's production of A Gentleman’s Guide to Love and Murder, or the Winnipeg Fringe Festival.

Scott Rumble*

Black Goose #2

Tenor Scott Rumble is an emerging dramatic talent making his mark on Canadian stages. This season includes a return to l’Opéra de Montréal as Descartes (cover) in the world premiere of Bilodeau’s La reine-garçon and as Arrigo in Voicebox: Opera in Concert’s production of Verdi’s La battaglia de Legnano. Last season highlights included a role debut as Steuermann in Vancouver Opera’s The Flying Dutchman; covering the lead role of Göring in the world premiere of La beauté du monde for l’Opéra de Montréal; and singing Jason in Cherubini’s Medée for Opera in Concert, having sung Anatol in their 2022 production of Barber’s Vanessa.

Scott is an alumnus of Calgary Opera’s Emerging Artist Development Program and the Yulanda M. Faris Young Artist Program at Vancouver Opera. Other recent appearances include A Waltz Dream with Toronto Operetta Theatre, Mozart’s Requiem with the Vancouver Bach Choir, Ferrando in Brott Opera’s drive-in production of Così fan tutte, and Beethoven’s Symphony No. 9 with the Brott Festival.

Charlene Van Buekenhout*

Josephine-Marie/ Narrator

Charlene Van Buekenhout (she/her/char) is a Michif/Belgian/Canadian theatre artist originally from Dauphin, Manitoba (Treaty Two), now residing in Treaty One. She is the Artistic Producer of Echo Theatre, a professional actor, theatre creator, and director. www.echotheatre.net

Her Michif language show for young audiences, Minoosh Doo-Kapeeshiw (about a cat who goes camping), was featured at the 2022 Winnipeg Fringe Festival, the Indigenous Languages of Manitoba Festival, and the Métis Elders and Youth Gathering in Selkirk, Manitoba. Charlene is part of the development of a Southern Michif play Doo-Pashkishok Lii Padrii (about acquiring tasty partridges for dinner).

Kichi marsii to the team for inviting me to be part of this story. Marsii ma famiiy, Kevin pi Phoebe, pi kahkiyaaw lli Michifs past, present, and future. Wahkohtowin. Ekoshi!

David Watson

Pierre La Grande

Bass-baritone David Watson is a veteran of opera and concert stages across Canada and continues to earn praise for the richness and power of his voice.

His recent appearance in last season’s Cosi fan tutte marked David’s 51st production with Manitoba Opera. His mainstage debut was as Baron Duphol in the Sunday matinee of La Traviata in 1979.

He has also performed with the Canadian Opera Company, the opera companies of Vancouver, Calgary, Edmonton, Saskatchewan, and Hamilton, as well as Pacific Opera Victoria, Opera Lyra Ottawa, and Rainbow Stage.
The Artists

Yvonne Chartrand*
Choreographer/Dancer

Yvonne Chartrand is a contemporary choreographer, dancer, and an award-winning master Métis jigger. Her ancestors come from the Métis community of St. Laurent, Manitoba.

Yvonne is artistic director of the dance company, V’ni Dansi (“Come Dance” in Michif), which she founded in 2000. Yvonne’s Métis dance work was passed to her through many Métis Elders across the Métis homeland; she is one of the only people in Canada who holds this traditional knowledge.

As a cultural keeper, Yvonne is dedicated to preserving traditional Métis dance with the Louis Riel Métis Dancers, yet her contemporary work is always informed by her Métis identity. Through her innovative works, she shares the joy, love, beauty, and truth of the Michif world view.

Her work tours nationally and internationally.

In 2011, Yvonne was awarded the Victor Martyn Lynch-Staunton Award from the Canada Council for the Arts.

Danielle Enblom*
Dancer

Described as “wild, refined, and joyful,” Danielle Enblom’s dancing is imbued with a wealth of knowledge, depth of experience, and pure love of music and culture.

Danielle, a Minneapolis, Minnesota, artist is a step dancer, jigger, fiddler, and dance historian with strong Red River Métis, French-Canadian, and Swedish ancestral roots. In her early years, she was immersed in Irish music and dance, and during adulthood has turned towards her family’s Métis and Québécois practices.

Danielle holds a Diploma in Traditional Irish Music from University College Cork and an MA in Ethnochoreology from Munster Technological University, Ireland.

Danielle has shared the stage with many top Irish musicians including Altan, Lunasa, Liz Carroll, Seamus Egan, John Doyle, and Cherish the Ladies. Her recent works include a project with Cumar, a collaboration with master West African drummers and dancers, and touring with Canada’s leading Celtic fiddle-guitar duo, Pierre Schryer & Adam Dobres.

Modeste McKenzie*
Dancer

Modeste McKenzie is a 28-year-old Dene-Métis man originally from La Ronge, Saskatchewan, but currently residing in Prince Albert, Saskatchewan. He has been jigging, square dancing, and instructing throughout western Canada for the last 16 years. He is an alternate dancer for the Creeland Dancers, lead male dancer for the Qu’Appelle Valley Square Dancers, and co-director and lead male dancer for the Northern Prairie Dancers.

In addition to his dancing, he is a second year student at the University of Regina where he studies philosophy, politics, and economics and most importantly, he is full-time father to his seven-year-old daughter.

Élise Page*
Dancer

Élise is a French Canadian Métis who had the opportunity of growing up in a music-making, folk-singing, barefoot-dancing large family. She later graduated from the School of Contemporary Dancers, which gave her the opportunity to dance for great Canadian choreographers such as Tedd Robinson, Constance Cooke, and Marie-Josée Chartier. She had the pleasure of working for Jolene Bailie with Gearshifting Performance Works for several seasons, as well as one season dancing for Casimiro Nhussi with Nafro Dance Productions.

Her contemporary dance career took a backseat while she started a family and pursued her dream of entrepreneurship, but her passion for dance kept her in dance studio enough to have the honour of dancing in Li Keur: Riel’s Heart of the North.
The Artists

**Ryan Richard**

*Dancer*

Ryan Richard is a two-spirited Aboriginal performing artist from Winnipeg who was born on Sandy Bay First Nation, Manitoba.

Ryan is an award-winning jigging and square-dancing champion who first learned jigging at the footsteps of his grandmother, Irene Richard, herself a championship jigger. At age three, Ryan won his first jigging competition in Austin, Manitoba. At 17, he wowed audiences at Winnipeg’s Folklorama Métis Pavilion and went on to found the award-winning square dance group, United Thunder.

He is the current Canadian Jigging Champion, a five-time World Jigging Champion, and a 15-time jigging champion at Festival du Voyageur. Ryan’s contemporary twist on the traditional jig has motivated a new generation of young dancers including Canada’s Got Talent winners, Sagkeen’s Finest.

In addition to his jigging, Ryan has made a splash in the drag community as performer, Miss Sandi Bay, “All the Way from Crane River Where They Giv’er.”

From a young age, Ryan knew he was different and was encouraged by his grandmother to just go along with his feelings and be himself. Ryan enjoys the opportunity to act as a role model for today’s youth. His guiding philosophy in life: There is no wrong way to feel.

**Jera Wolfe**

*Dancer*

Born in Tkaronto/Toronto, Jera Wolfe is a choreographer and performer of Métis heritage.

His captivating choreography has awarded him the 2019 Dora Mavor Moore Award for Outstanding Original Choreography for Trace by Red Sky Performance. He has demonstrated an impressive repertoire of works presented by Canadian Stage, Fall for Dance North, Banff Centre for Arts and Creativity, Festival des arts de Saint-Sauveur, Citadel + Compagnie, Danse Danse, and Jacob’s Pillow.

His choreographic works include creations with the National Ballet of Canada, Canada’s Royal Winnipeg Ballet, Canada’s National Ballet School, Winnipeg’s Contemporary Dancers, and Red Sky Performance.

In 2022, Jera’s largest work, *Arise*, performed by 146 professional dance students from Canada’s National Ballet School was presented at Meridian Hall as part of Fall for Dance North’s Signature program.

As a performer, Jera has danced for Red Sky Performance, as well as Peggy Baker Dance Projects. He is also the lead performer in *PISUWIN* with Atlantic Ballet.

**Melissa St. Goddard**

*Fiddle*

Melissa St. Goddard is a Métis fiddler from Portage la Prairie, Manitoba. With family roots in the Métis community of St. Ambroise, Manitoba, she grew up surrounded by the sounds of the fiddle, which led her to start playing the instrument herself.

Over the years, she has had the opportunity to perform at events across the country such as Back to Batoche Days, the Indspire Awards, Indigenous Day Live, and many more. She not only performs, but has dedicated herself to teaching traditional Métis fiddle playing to the next generation.

**Jordan McConnell**

*Guitar*

Jordan McConnell is a founding member of the Juno Award-winning and Grammy-nominated band The Duhks. He became interested in traditional Irish music as a teenager and learned to play the tin whistle before teaching himself to play the Irish pipes.

He was introduced to Métis music by Alex Kusturok through a series of gigs they did together in 2010. He and Alex most recently performed together at this year’s Festival du Voyageur.

Jordan now builds guitars for customers around the world out of his small shop in the North End of Winnipeg.
Jacqueline Loewen  
**Fight Director**

Jacqueline worked in many aspects of physical theatre – as an actor, mime, sketch comedy writer, and theatre creator – before creating fight sequences for opera.  
As a fight choreographer, she has worked on every stage in Manitoba, as well as some in Toronto, Vancouver, Thunder Bay, and Kansas. In Winnipeg, she has built operatic-sized conflicts for the Manitoba Opera productions of *Susannah*, *Otello*, *Carmen*, *Tosca*, and *Don Giovanni*.

Jacqueline also works with singers as a performance coach, both privately and at the University of Manitoba’s Desautels Faculty of Music, creating, with the singer, a sense of embodied action in their characters.

**T. Erin Gruber**  
**Set & Projection Designer**

T. Erin Gruber is an award-winning theatre designer with experience in set, lighting, costume, and projected media design. She is a graduate with distinction of the University of Alberta and a member of the board of directors of the Associated Designers of Canada.  
She works professionally across Canada, and her work has been toured and exhibited nationally and internationally. In June 2019, her work was featured at the Prague Quadrennial International Design Exhibition. In 2021 during COVID-19 lockdowns she conceived of, project-managed, and co-curated the Level Up Symposium which comprised of 40 free online events with more than 50 international presenters.

Award-winning projects: *Métis Mutt* (One Little Indian Productions, Sterling Award for Outstanding Production), *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time* (Citadel Theatre and RMTC, Sterling Award for Lighting Design), *Category E* (Production Design, Maggie Tree Collective, Sterling Awards for Lighting and Projected Media Design).

Online at: eringruber.com, levelup.designers.ca

Samay Arcentales Cajas  
**Assistant Projection Designer**

Samay Arcentales Cajas is a Toronto-based queer Kichwa digital media artist exploring human-land relations, new media dimensions of Indigenous cosmology, and immersive art as a site of liberation.  
Her works have been shown at ImagineNATIVE, Xpace Cultural Centre, Tarragon Theatre, TQFF, Prague Quadrennial, among others. Samay currently works as a video designer, facilitator and install technician.

Deanna Finnman  
**Costume Designer**

This is Deanna’s debut production with Manitoba Opera. She has designed costumes for over 150 professional productions including dance, theatre, and opera.  
Recent costume credits include *La Bohème*, *Rigoletto*, *Cosi fan tutte*, and *Count Ory* (Edmonton Opera); *Pride and Prejudice* (Citadel Theatre); *Two Headed Half Hearted* (Northern Light Theatre); *Cinderella*, *Sleeping Beauty*, *Pinocchio* (Alberta Musical Theatre) and *The Magic Flute* (Calgary Opera).

Deanna is grateful to be part of such a collaborative and historic production and would like to thank cultural adviser Evan Ducharme for his thoughtfulness and guidance, the Métis clothing makers and historians who generously shared their skills, knowledge, and love of Métis culture, and the many costumers both in in Winnipeg and across Canada who brought these costumes to reality.
The Artists

Evan Ducharme*
Costume Design
Cultural Consultant

Evan Ducharme is Métis from St. Ambroise, Manitoba (Treaty One). With both ancestral and contemporary Michif knowledge, their work examines Métis history and its cultural iconography with a subversion of colonial notions of gender, queerness, and relations to place.

Evan’s work has been featured in National Geographic, Fashion magazine, Vogue.com, Quelemia Sparrow’s Skyborn, Tai Amy Grauman’s You Used to Call Me Marie, and The Metropolitan Museum of Art’s Costume Institute exhibition In America: A Lexicon of Fashion.

Evan Ducharme currently lives and creates with gratitude on their home territories in Winnipeg, (Treaty One).

Scott Henderson
Lighting Designer

Scott Henderson is excited to be designing this premiere production of Li Keur: Riel’s Heart of the North. Scott has designed 13 productions for Manitoba Opera including La Cenerentola and two different productions of Così fan Tutte.

Winnipeg-based, Scott designs lighting for theatre, opera, and dance across Canada. He is the lighting director for Canada’s Royal Winnipeg Ballet and teaches Lighting Design at the University of Winnipeg.

Special thanks to Karen, Sean, and Alex for love and support.

Monica Chen*
Assistant Conductor

An emerging Canadian conductor, Monica Chen was recently appointed Assistant Conductor of the Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra, as well as Music Director of the University of Manitoba Symphony Orchestra and Sistema Winnipeg program, working closely with Maestro Daniel Raiskin. She is also a conducting fellow with Tapestry Opera, assisting opera companies across the country.

Monica was selected as one of the conducting fellows in the inaugural year of Orchestre Métropolitain’s Conducting Academy, assisting Yannick Nézet-Séguin since 2021. Recent conducting engagements include working with Opera Kelowna, Astrolabe Musik Theatre, Allegra Chamber Orchestra, Opera Kelowna, Orchestre Symphonique de Québec and the Orchestre Métropolitain. She has had the opportunity to work with acclaimed conductors such as maestros Neil Varon, Thomas Rösner, and the late Bramwell Tovey. Monica completed two masters, one in Orchestral Conducting from UBC studying with Dr. Jonathan Girard and the other in violin performance from Indiana University studying with Mimi Zweig.

Steve Denby*
Adult Chorus Director

Having retired from the public school system in 2021, Steve Denby is now enjoying the time to explore new opportunities for growth and expression. Steve grew up only vaguely aware of his Métis heritage but is realizing the impact that his family’s traditions (mostly musical) have had on his life and career. The “kitchen party”, where singing harmony was as natural as making tea, led organically to his early and perpetual collaborations with family and friends in music-making.

Steve is honored and thrilled to be serving as chorus director for Li Keur: Riel’s Heart of the North. This is his first experience directing the chorus for Manitoba Opera, and he is thoroughly enjoying meeting new friends, diving deep into this new and exciting music, and learning more about traditional languages and the rich Métis culture so deeply woven into the fabric of our province and nation.

Jennifer Engbrecht*
Children’s Chorus Director

Jennifer Engbrecht is of English, Scottish, German, and Métis heritage. She has taught elementary music and choir in the Louis Riel School Division for almost 30 years.

Most recently, she has engaged students in learning from the land around them for music inspiration. She has an interest in the Métis’ connection to the land, going on nature walks with the Manitoba Métis Federation (MMF) and other organizations to learn more about plants and uses, and loves seeing the importance of plants and nature infused throughout Li Keur.
The Artists

Tadeusz Biernacki
Répétiteur

The 2023/24 season marks Tadeusz Biernacki’s 41st with the company as assistant music director, chorus master, and rehearsal pianist. Winner of the K. Szymanowski Piano Competition (Warsaw, Poland), he has performed internationally as a piano soloist and has conducted major orchestras across Canada, as well as around the world including the Tessoniki State Orchestra, St. Paul Chamber Orchestra, Cleveland Opera Orchestra, Kaohsiung City Symphony Orchestra, and the Hong Kong Sinfonietta.

Mr. Biernacki has also written numerous orchestral arrangements for the TSO, NAC Orchestra, and others. He was music director of Saskatoon Opera and the Royal Winnipeg Ballet and has conducted a number of productions for Manitoba Opera, most recently, The Sopranos of Winnipeg concert in 2020.

Kathryn Ball
Assistant Stage Manager

Kathryn has done 27 productions with Manitoba Opera. She is thrilled to be working on this world premiere! Kathryn has been the production manager at Rainbow Stage for the last two years. Prior to that, she stage managed many shows in Winnipeg at Royal Manitoba Theatre Centre, Prairie Theatre Exchange, the Royal Winnipeg Ballet and Rainbow Stage, and across the country at The Citadel in Edmonton, and The Globe Theatre in Regina. She has also had the privilege of touring many shows across the country and throughout Manitoba. Kathryn feels so fortunate to work on this special production and hopes you enjoy the show!

Robert Pel
Stage Manager

Robert Pel’s first contract with Manitoba Opera was in 1984 for Aïda. He would return in early 2000 to stage manage a production of Rigoletto.

In 2013 Robert returned to Manitoba Opera to stage another production of Aïda and has been returning each year since.

Over the past 45 years, he has had the good fortune to stage manage at most of the opera companies in Canada, as well as theatre companies, and this has allowed him to travel to every province and territory but one.

Robert resides in Stratford, Ontario. His love for motorcycles, kilts, his three daughters, four grandchildren, and lovely wife (not necessarily in that order) give him a very rich life. It is with great joy that Robert is part of this original production, and it gives him pleasure to work with this excellent company.

Heather Lee Brereton
Assistant Stage Manager

Heather has worked in various capacities in the Winnipeg theatre/arts community for over 15 years. She has assumed many roles (stage management, designer, props builder, wardrobe co-ordinator, technician) for regional and independent theatre productions. After apprenticing with MOA over a decade ago, she re-joined the Manitoba Opera stage management team in 2019 with The Barber of Seville and Susannah.

When not stage managing, Heather creates custom garments, performance costumes and accessories for private clients (Heather Lee Bea) including vintage clothing enthusiasts, circus performers, drag artists, and a Marilyn Monroe impersonator.

For this production, Heather has also been busy sourcing and building the many props used to help tell the story. Many thanks to the village of folks behind the scenes for their physical and intellectual contributions to the show. Heather is excited to be part of this world premiere with Manitoba Opera!

Parks Canada Lobby Presentation

Thanks to Parks Canada staff – Holly Bernier, Laurie MacDonell, Kaitlyn Pyett, Marc-André Belcourt, Matt Rothenberger, Dylan Preece, and Alana Jansen – for enhancing patron experience at Li Keur: Riel’s Heart of the North by providing interpretive presentations in the lobby.
Riel House
National Historic Site
Lieu historique national de la Maison-Riel

Métis stories live here
parks.canada.ca/manitoba

Les histoires du peuple métis vivent ici
parcs.canada.ca/manitoba

Canada

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lumi
inspiring Indigenous stories and storytellers

stream anytime, anywhere

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Translators, Language Keepers, and Coaches

Donna Beach  Jules Chartrand  François Fontaine
Debra Beach Ducharme  Lorraine Coutu  Patsy Millar
June Bruce  Verna de Montigny  Andrea Rose
Agathe Chartrand  Joyce Dumont  Suzanne Zeke

Manitoba Opera Chorus

Adults

René Beaulieu  Max Fingerote  Kenton McPeek
David Boyes  Erik Gillespie  Emily Meadows
Janine Brémault-Bamford  Marlon Goolcharan  Emily Myers
Alyx Buhler  Evan Hawkins  René Perrault
Cheryl-Anne Carr  Micheline Hay  Diane Sabourin
Chris Caslake  Steven A. Howes  Raymond Sokalski
Danielle Chammartin  Michal Kowalik  Jonathan Stitt
Kirpluk  Richard Lambert  Nicole Stonyk
Marie Christian  Don Larsen  Paul Sullivan
Edward Cloud  Rebecca Lee  Lola Whonnock
Camryn Dewar  Katrina Lengsavath  Chelsey Young

Children

Amy Bouchard  Sofia Fernández-Couto  Brynlea Lussier
Alice Coates  Sam Fuller  Finley McPhillips
Finn Deck  Evangeline James  Curtis Meadows
Glecy Mae Dimagmaliw  Aurélia James  Zianna Romance
Andrea Fernández-Couto  Eve Kirpluk  Zina Alexis Ruis
Rebeca Fernández-Couto  Violet Kirpluk

Supernumeraries

Tyler Moody  Barney Morin

Li Keur Creative Replicated in Beadwork

The beautiful creative for promotion of Li Keur: Riel’s Heart of the North was reproduced as a beaded art piece by Red River Métis beadwork artist Claire Johnston and is currently on display in the lobby.

The original design was the work of The Show and Tell agency creative team (formerly known as McKim Communications Group).

ABOUT THE ARTIST

Claire Johnston (they/she) is based in the Métis Homeland/Treaty One Territory. They are currently mentoring under Master Beadwork Artist and Knowledge Keeper Jennine Krauchi, as well as engaging in intergenerational knowledge transfer from their father Roy Johnston.

Claire Johnston at work.
Doing Right by People is our purpose.
This is why we’ve created a workplace where experiences can be shared and employees are encouraged to pay our successes forward in their communities, in their own way.

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Donating our time is the most rewarding way we can spend it.
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AIMEE PALMER
Regional Vice-President
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Production Personnel

Director of Production
Sheldon Johnson

Audio Engineer (Dialogue)
John Bent Jr.

Firearms Safety Co-ordinator
Dave Brown

Projected Titles Cueing
Cary Denby

Assistant Projections Designer
Samay Arcentales Cajas

Apprentice Stage Director
Rayna Masterton

Apprentice Stage Manager
Tia Morann

Music Staff

Assistant Conductor
Monica Chen

Répétiteur
Tadeusz Biernacki

Adult Chorus Director
Steve Denby

Chorus Rehearsal Pianists
Cary Denby
Megan Dufrat
Celoris Miller

Young People's Chorus Director
Jennifer Engbrecht

Assistant Conductor
Monica Chen

Répétiteur
Tadeusz Biernacki

Chorus Rehearsal Pianists
Cary Denby
Megan Dufrat
Celoris Miller

Music preparation by
Greg Hamilton Music Service

Set and Props Construction

Head of Wardrobe
Brenda Belmonte

Wardrobe Co-ordinator
Tess Martin

Wardrobe Head (RWB)
Alena Zharska

Wardrobe Assistant
Samantha Lekach

Cutters
Tess Pallister
Edmond Santelices
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Li Keur: Riel’s Heart of the North is first and foremost a celebration of Métis culture and community. However, the opera does contain scenes that reference events in Métis history that were traumatic for those who experienced them and have been the root of generational trauma that continues to impact Métis communities. While many of the characters you will see on stage are fictitious, actions that caused the Métis people to face hardships like displacement, starvation, disease, violence, and depression are a matter of historical fact that can be neither ignored nor forgotten.

What is Trauma?

Trauma is a part of the human experience. A traumatic event can occur at any life stage and may continue to impact us in different ways at different times throughout our lives.

How we experience trauma differs from person to person. Many people affected by trauma may not yet realize all that has happened to them and how they have been affected. Others may want help but may not feel quite ready to ask for it. What is important to know is that there are resources and supports available to us to help find ways to cope with those experiences.

A Trauma-Informed Approach to the Arts

Watching an opera elicits a range of responses. Many of us are swept away by the performance, the music, and the sets and costumes. It is an enjoyable experience on so many levels. Sometimes, however, the themes or subject matter of a performance may impact us in a different way. This can be especially true if the themes or subject matter are something we have experienced on a personal level. Some of us may experience the performance as distressing. It can trigger or bring up a range of other (sometimes unsettling) feelings.

Integrating a trauma-informed perspective recognizes that we as audience members may view, interpret, or experience performances in a multitude of ways based on our own life experiences.

Knowing this can in turn help us to prepare, normalize our feelings, and identify some coping strategies.

What you can do if feeling triggered by a performance?

It’s important to pay attention and listen to your body, thoughts, and feelings. During times of stress we may experience what is known as the fight, flight or freeze response. Our nervous system is activated and the body becomes primed for action.

You may notice:

- Rapid heartbeat or breathing
- The body becoming tense which can result in shaking or trembling
- Pale or flushed skin

In order to regain a sense of calm, it is important to engage the parasympathetic nervous system. Some mindfulness activities to help you do this include:

- Grounding exercises such as putting your feet flat on the ground and squeezing your toes
- Stretching
- Deep breathing
- Chewing gum
- Going for a walk.

Perhaps the most important tool is to understand that you are not in current danger. Self-talk can help us reframe our experience and shorten the length of the fight/flight/freeze stress response.

Resources

Manitoba Métis Federation, Mental Health Support Line
Phone: 1-833-390-1041, ext 1. (7 am to 11 pm daily)

Klinic Crisis & Support Line Services Crisis Line (24/7)
Phone: 204-786-8686
Toll free: 1-800-322-3019

First Nations and Inuit Hope for Wellness Helpline Crisis Line (24/7)
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Online: hopeforwellness.ca

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“Curated to be a part of the heart of Manitoba where the echoes of history reverberate, we are thrilled to present an extraordinary gathering of Métis artists at the Piano Nobile Gallery,” commented Liz Barron.

“This exhibition, featuring the remarkable works of Jason Baerg, David Garneau, Claire Johnston, and Amanda Smart, invites us to explore the vibrant and ever-evolving Métis identity. This visionary assembly of artists transcends boundaries, delving deep into the contemporary Métis experience. With their powerful narratives and innovative expressions, they illuminate the complex interplay between heritage, culture, and the path forward.”

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