

The Summit

Meditations on an Indigenous Body of Work

April 22-24, 2014 – The Banff Centre
Report prepared by Co-Curators Yvette Nolan and Sarah Garton Stanley
& Rapporteur Corey Payette
Photographs by Marnie Richardson



Canada Council for the Arts
Conseil des arts du Canada



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About This Document

Summit co-curators Yvette Nolan and Sarah Garton Stanley, with the help of Summit rapporteur Corey Payette prepared this document. Our curatorial wish is to share the spirit of The Summit in our writings. We have all contributed to the document, each of us speaking from our personal perspectives of our time spent together. Part recounting, part impression and part report, this document aims to give you, the reader, a sense of our time focused on unpacking sensibilities surrounding the Summit's subtitle: Meditations on an Indigenous Body of Work.

About The Summit

Co-curated by Yvette Nolan, Playwright/Director, and Sarah Garton Stanley, Associate Artistic Director – National Arts Centre (NAC) English Theatre

Produced by NAC English theatre in Collaboration with Indigenous Performing Arts Alliance, The Banff Centre and Luminato Festival with the generous support of Canada Council for the Arts and the Australia Council for the Arts

From April 22-24, 2014, Leaders of Indigenous theatre gathered with institutional 'Listeners' at the Banff Centre to engage in a dialogue about understanding and translating notions of a "Canon" to a "Body" of Indigenous works in Canada. There were five sessions, each facilitated by Summit participants and one performance excerpt:

Moments of Transformation

moderated by Laakkuluk Williamson Bathory, Mask & Drum Dancer, Storyteller, co-creator of *Tulugak*

What space do the Indigenous Performing Arts hold in this country's culture?

moderated by Cole Alvis, Executive Director - Indigenous Performing Arts Alliance

Making Treaty 7 Performance excerpt

performed by the Making Treaty 7 society

Discussion about the *Making Treaty 7*

moderated by Sandra Laronde, Indigenous Arts – Banff Centre; Artistic Director – Red Sky Performance

The Canon – is there one? In, out, irrelevant?

moderated by Jani Lauzon, Actor/Teacher/Writer

Synthesis – What would an Indigenous Study look like?

moderated by Yvette Nolan and Sarah Garton Stanley

Statement of Vision and Goals

Sarah Garton Stanley

The English Theatre at Canada's National Arts Centre went to The Summit for knowledge, and we travelled there with a desire to engage cultural powerhouses in the work of accessing this knowledge. Sarah Garton Stanley, in her capacity as Associate Artistic Director was charged by Artistic Director Jillian Keiley to construct an engaged and investigative space for questions of Indigenous Theatre in Canada. English Theatre has, since its inception in 1969, had a relationship to the First Nations People of this country. But as with many institutions, our capacity to access and understand the breadth and volume of work being created on this land needed a new look.

The NAC has a vibrant and meaningful interest in Indigenous works. Recently, The Scenes presented Northern Scene, Canada Dance Festival is presenting Signal Theatre's *A Soldier's Tale*, and programming initiatives throughout the entire organization reflect the NAC's institutional engagement, moreover the general excitement over English Theatre's initiative for The Summit speaks to the genuine interest to better understand the breadth on Indigenous performance work.

There are a couple of big names that have crossed over into contemporary mainstream theatrical consciousness; Tomson Highway and Marie Clements are the two breakthrough artists that first spring to mind when thinking about Indigenous dramaturgy. Highway, whose membrane-puncturing *The Rez Sisters* defined for subsequent generations what was possible, and Clements, who in recent years has inhabited a number of main stages with her wild and unflinching looks at contemporary questions facing First Nations peoples in this country. NAC audiences might recall her staggering *Burning Vision* (Magnetic North Festival, 2003).

But what of all the other artists - populist and otherwise - who are making work in this country? Who are the leaders? What are the works? Are there broader ways of defining theatrical performance based on cultural differences? What of the oral traditions? Can the breadth of these works be recreated and properly presented in dominant institutional settings? These questions formed the basis of our inquiry at The Summit.

Our goal was to create a vital conversation that could lead to informed choices about how to approach a larger, longer, and more involved investigation of a "Body of Work". This is to be The Study; NAC English Theatre's initiative scheduled for Spring 2015. Yvette Nolan came on board to work with Stanley to co-curate both The Summit and The Study.

Because of the perceived need for a restart, we chose to approach the conversation in a fresh and formal way. It was an experiment. The Leaders were referred to as Leaders throughout The Summit and were treated with the respect and privileges that leaders are accorded. The Leaders were invited to speak throughout The Summit. The Listeners were referred to as Listeners and were invited to listen. This formal experiment in rebalancing the power in the room delivered tremendous results. Not only was the discourse deep, involved and open, but as well, The Listeners found that they were engaging with the issues in an entirely different way. It would not be too much to say that this formal approach created a sense of “us” out of all the participants – Leaders and Listeners alike.

Gaining good direction for The Study was our first goal; engagement with other cultural players in this pursuit was the second. Together with The Banff Centre for the Arts, The Luminato Festival, the Indigenous Performing Arts Alliance, Canada Council for the Arts, Australia Council for the Arts, and The *Making Treaty 7* Cultural Society, we were able to host twelve Indigenous Leaders and eleven institutional Listeners over three days at Banff.

What follows in this report is a series of impressions and findings from our discussions at The Summit. Our goal leading in to next year for The Study is to take inspiration from these conversations to help inform and structure our two-week investigation in 2015. The Study will gather together professional actors and performance students as well as other creative artists and academics to steep us in Indigenous dramaturgy. The NAC’s goal is that The Study should impact broadly on the programming choices being made by theatres across the country, and make it part of vital and necessary steps towards bringing Indigenous approaches and stories closer to the centre of our national expression.

-Co-Curator Sarah Garton Stanley

The Summit Participant List

The Curators:

Yvette Nolan
Sarah Garton Stanley

Playwright/Director
Associate Artistic Director NAC English Theatre

The Leaders:

Cole Alvis
Herbie Barnes
Brian Calliou
Ryan Cunningham
Michael Greyeyes
Margo Kane

Executive Director - Indigenous Performing Arts Alliance
Actor/Director/Teacher – 2014-15 NAC Ensemble
Director – Indigenous Arts, Banff Centre
Artistic Director – Native Earth, Producer
Artistic Director – Signal Theatre
Artistic Managing Director – Full Circle: First Nations
Performance

Sandra Laronde

Director – Indigenous Arts, Banff Centre; AD – Red Sky
Performance

Jani Lauzon
Rachael Maza
Monique Mojica
Daniel David Moses
Laakkuluk Williamson Bathory

Actor/Teacher/Writer
Artistic Director – Ilbjerri Theatre (Australia)
Actor/Writer – Chocolate Woman Collective
Playwright/Teacher – Queen’s University
Mask & Drum Dancer, Storyteller, co-creator of *Tulugak*

The Listeners:

Collette Brennan

Naomi Campbell
Michael Green
Jillian Keiley
Andy Lunney
Nathan Medd
Guylaine Normandin
Corey Payette
Brian Quirt
Carolyn Warren
Jörn Weisbrodt

Director of Market Development – Australia Council for
the Arts
Director, Artistic Development – Luminato Festival
Artistic Director – One Yellow Rabbit; Making Treaty 7
Artistic Director – NAC English Theatre
Producer – NAC English Theatre
Managing Director – NAC English Theatre
Head, Theatre Section – Canada Council for the Arts
Playwright/Artistic Director – Raven Theatre
Director - Playwrights Colony, Banff Centre
Vice-President, Arts – Banff Centre
Artistic Director – Luminato Festival



Laakkuluk Williamson Bathory & Cole Alvis



Michael Greyeyes & Yvette Nolan

Moments of Transformation

Yvette Nolan

We always hope that people will be transformed by any act of theatre, but exactly how your audience will be transformed is rarely predictable.

“Art in Inuktitut is translated to “the making of strange things.” –
Laakkuluk Williamson Bathory

So it was with The Summit; I do not think we set out to transform our participants, and yet, in retrospect the process was well begun even before the first session, titled Moments of Transformation. Preceding the first session, the opening by Elder Tom, clocking in at 45 minutes, was succinct by Indigenous standards, but may have been a new experience for some in the room for whom time is so often equated with money. Elder Tom’s pace, rhythm, soft voice and storytelling set the tone for the kind of listening we would be asked to do in the next three days.

A seven-minute video that we had made to introduce the artistic leaders to the room surpassed expectations. I had seen it in various iterations as Corey Payette and Colin Van Loon built it, giving notes and making suggestions, so I was surprised to find myself moved to tears when watching it with the assembly. The images spanned thirty years of Indigenous performance, giving us glimpses of (among other things) a very young Margo Kane, Michael Greyeyes as a movie star, Monique Mojica in a diversity of works by a clutch of Canadian theatres.

Beginnings can be difficult: awkward, stiff, tentative. The Summit was further complicated by what Sarah referred to as The Formal Experiment – the fact that

the Listeners were expected to listen, and not speak, except in specific sessions. The Formal Experiment was born of the desire to hear the artist leaders in discussion with each other about what they knew, without imposing upon them the need to stop and interpret, explain or educate, but I did worry that the process might make it feel like the leaders were performing a conversation, rather than actually engaging in one.

Laakkuluk Williamson Bathory, who had agreed to facilitate the session, gently and gracefully moved the assembly into the process. She began the first session with a drum song that linked the sacred and the profane, breaking the reserve of the assembly. Then she offered her own moment of transformation: at the age of 24, she chose to use her Inuit name instead of her Christian name, Sarah.

As the stories came, works that have existed were named, as were the artists who made them. Although they were not in the room with us, they were in the room with us: Spiderwoman Theater, who had recently lost Lisa Mayo, a founding member; Tomson Highway; the late Rene Highway; Drew Hayden Taylor; Debajehmujig; Lorne Cardinal; Billy Merasty. Names were scribed on the walls, and we began to see how we got here: a map to The Summit.

-Co-Curator Yvette Nolan



Margo Kane & Naomi Campbell



Monique Mojica & Jani Lauzon

What space do the Indigenous Performing Arts hold in this Country's Culture?

Two views: First look – Corey Payette

It is difficult to discuss the space for Indigenous Performing Arts in Canada without first acknowledging the history of Aboriginal Performing Arts and the lack of support for these artists. The first statement of this conversation was by Margo Kane, reflecting on the struggle

“Lack of funding has made our work struggle in making the work happen. Spending years creating a stable company (Full Circle) that can support Aboriginal artists has slowed down the artistic work we want to pursue” – Margo Kane

to secure funding in a model that is focused on supporting western- based arts practices. Context is important: Aboriginal peoples in this country only received the right to vote in 1960, and the “nation-building” period happened without mention of Aboriginal artists. Only since the 1980s have Aboriginal arts been supported in this country, and even then they were receiving less than 1% of the funding at Canada Council. In 2005, the few companies had grown to receive 3%. All of these companies were doing new work, and putting it onstage as soon as possible or it would never happen. They were doing outreach, community work, festivals, and training programs – all to support their community while receiving a fraction of the support that other performing arts institutions (music, dance, ballet) were receiving for the same level activity.

Creative Aboriginal artists can burn out, creating new work constantly only to see their work be presented by other Aboriginal theatre companies without being supported by mainstream theatre companies. The Leaders are expected to balance all of this

“It is an institution of original work being given priority and impedes the growth and development of our work. When you have a performance coming up, it stops the creative process.” – Monique Mojica

work without a chance to revisit and make their work better through repetition. Jani Lauzon mentioned the production *Bones* (2001) that had being created at the Banff Centre; it went through many stages of development where they were trying to create a product that fits within the rules of the established western framework. Once it premiered, it was well received but never revisited.

Space is a limiting factor in that we have not claimed our space in the national Canadian arts. In the range of what it means to be Canadian we occupy an important space. Indigenous arts are front and center in the identity of our Canadian culture. In tourism, Indigenous images are used as a badge of pride but we as performing artists are living, breathing artists that need a space to continue exploring ways of creating, protocols in collaboration, and developing a different dramaturgical model that refuses western colonial processes and looks toward the development of our artistic practice. Our way of working is process driven, and involves education and mentoring for younger artists to develop work of their own. This ensures that our work lives on by continuing the indigenous model of working.

“Non-native Canadian culture takes so much of its identity from the northern culture. In that nation-building period there was so much material taken from Aboriginal cultures in a non-verbal way and everyone has this connection to them.” – Laakkuluk Williamson Bathory

-Summit Rapporteur Corey Payette



Monique Mojica



The Banff Centre

What space do the Indigenous Performing Arts hold in this Country's Culture?

Two views: Second Look – Sarah Garton Stanley

The overwhelming sense was that the answer to the above question is, “A lot... but it depends how it is measured.” It depends – as well – on who is reaping the rewards of the space being taken up, and how deeply it drills down into the generalized cultural body politic.

Laakkuluk said, "Non-native Canadian culture takes so much of its identity from the northern culture. In that nation-building period there was so much material taken from Aboriginal cultures in a non-verbal way and everyone has this connection to them."

"In the range of what it means to be Canadian we occupy an important space. It is almost entirely visual, tourism. It's the badge of pride" - Michael Greyeyes

"In the range of what it means to be Canadian we occupy an important space. It is almost entirely visual, tourism. It's the badge of pride." – Michael Greyeyes

"True inclusion rather than the commodification that we have." – Monique Mojica

What I took all of these statements to mean (and there were several comments that aligned with this) was that indigeneity is used to heighten a sense of what it is to be Canadian without fully engaging with the cultures that created these "Canadian attributes". Yvette refers to this as the dominant cultures wish to divorce beads and buckskin from contemporary Indigenous work, to situate the entirety of indigenous experience within commodifiable material like the inukshuk.

The newly named Executive Director of the Indigenous Performing Arts Alliance (IPAA), Cole Alvis, moderated this session of The Summit, and he brought with him some "space" rather than beginning by facilitating discussion. Cole kicked off with questions and concerns and celebrations that IPAA membership hoped would be heard in the room. His membership added to the list of transformations and it was great to hear repeats as much as it was great to hear new additions.

"It is nice to hear an old song sung better" – Sandra Laronde

What became apparent early in the session was the wish for depth, repetition and revival of Indigenous work.

"There is a touring network between Native Earth, Alberta Aboriginal Arts, and Talking Stick Festival. All of the aboriginal companies are producing new work, and no one is presenting the existing canon of work." – Ryan Cunningham

"Touring small shows is a necessary salvo in terms of finding audiences." – Michael Greyeyes

While this was generally agreed with, Sandra Laronde added that "Often we show work and it needs a really good edit," and in concert with this, another of the leaders said, "It is nice to hear an old song sung better."

But as a balancer to this, Laakkuluk spoke to the economic barriers to Inuit work being conceived in this fashion. Rehearsals have to be short due to artists come from various places and the costs of travel being incredibly high and the journeys themselves arduous. So the modality, the ephemera of Inuit work – for the present – remains both oral and fleeting in its presence.

Ultimately the discussion circled around acceptable notions of both process and product, and that in both cases there is still a lot of work to be done between Indigenous and Non-Indigenous approaches to the creation and receipt of performance work in Canada.

A certain quote captured this notion succinctly: "Lionizing something is just code for filters" – Michael Greyeyes. While culturally visible in Canada's the governing sense is that a lot of the real cultural weight is being filtered out and that with real resources, time and space this "filtering" could be better recognized and improved upon.

"A different dramaturgical model – one that refutes colonial process." – Michael Greyeyes

- Co-Curator Sarah Garton Stanley



Ryan Cunningham, Sandra Laronde & Brian Calliou



Jani Lauzon, Cole Alvis & Yvette Nolan

Making Treaty 7

Sarah Garton Stanley

On our first evening at the Banff Centre we were invited to a special presentation of excerpts from the *Making Treaty 7* project that was in workshop at the Banff Centre. *Making Treaty 7* explores the historical significance of events at Blackfoot Crossing in 1877, while investigating the consequences and implications of Treaty 7, which has influenced the development modern-day Southern Alberta for 137 years. It is an immersive, transformational experience that invites people of all ages and backgrounds to consider an enlightened, sustainable future for everyone – together.

Visit: <http://www.makingtreaty7.com/>

Making Treaty 7 performance excerpt

The Making Treaty 7 performance included excerpts from the full-length piece to give the audience a taste of where the work is at in its development. It began with a prayer by Narcisse Blood in Blackfoot, asking the audience to stand and acknowledge the land and people who reside here. Justin Manyfingers sang a version of Cher's *Half Breed* with altered lyrics accompanied by the musicians behind him and included scenes depicting the interactions between the settlers and the Blackfoot people in the region when they were negotiating the treaty. In the audience included the Summit Leaders and Listeners, as well as the Banff Centre Playwright's Colony playwrights and performers who were also in Banff at the same time. The performance excerpt lasted 1 hour in length and gave the audience as sense of the work that has been done to date and also where they are headed.



Cherish Blood

Discussion about the Making of Treaty 7

Two views: First Look – Sarah Garton Stanley

The *Making Treaty 7* session was a different from the rest of The Summit in three key ways: 1. Everyone was free to speak and 2. The session was open to all the participants in *The Making Treaty 7* showcase that occurred the previous evening. 3. Due to the need to hold a circle of about 45 people we moved to another room building in a different building.

Sandra Laronde moderated the *Making Treaty 7* session and this felt appropriate as Banff has been an ongoing supporter of this project and, as well, given the open voice policy in the room, Sandra also wears the institutional mantel as director of indigenous Arts at the Banff Centre. It was a foot in both worlds kind of session and the project under examination was the inspiration for it.

I invited *Making Treaty 7* to participate at The Summit after seeing them present a small portion at ATP the year previous. It seemed like a piece that could spark our institutional interest both in its content goals and its process goals. The piece is about the signing of Treaty 7 and the process intends to be one that is a meeting place of the various cultural protocols of all the nations, colonizers and immigrant voices working together as Treaty 7 people and artists.

One moment resonated most forcefully and it was spoken in reference to The Truth and Reconciliation Commissions, Blake Brooker the director for *Making Treaty 7* was in mid-referral to this commission when he stopped and corrected himself he said: "Actually it can't be called reconciliation because there was no conciliation to begin with." This struck a chord but it also made sense of the tension that both *Making Treaty 7* and the conversation were shedding light on. A fierceness was present in this discussion that was largely absent from the other rooms: A need to attack and defend; A need to set up cultural jurisdictions; a need to divide academics from practitioners; a need to retain identity and hold onto hard won distinctions; a need to voice mistrust and a need to express desire. It was a lively space and it was the most fractious. The *Making Treaty 7* Cultural Society exposed their process to our prodding and it was a sincerely generous gesture that I hope proves generative for both for the project and for the Leaders and Listeners at The Summit.

It was a very engaging, challenging and mature conversation about the shadow lands of creation: especially as it pertains to First Nations stories and artists working with non-Indigenous creators. To my mind this project and our session formed the basis for considering the possibilities and pitfalls of colonizing and colonized histories being able to forge new cultural spaces in the future.

-Co-Curator Sarah Garton Stanley



Herbie Barnes, Daniel David Moses DM St Bernard, Corey Payette
Ryan Cunningham, Jani Lauzon & Guylaine Normandin



Sandra Laronde, Rio Mitchell, Cherish Blood, Blake Brooker & Jillian Keiley

Discussion about the Making of Treaty 7

Two views: Second Look – Yvette Nolan

If there was a failure to thrive session in The Summit, this was it for me. The discussion around *Making Treaty 7* was never going to be as penetrating and honest as I would have liked because of the presence of the performers whose work we had seen. As theatre professionals, we all want to be generous and supportive, and there was no way to truly examine the methodology of the *MT7* project without hurting the feelings of the artists. Critical analysis is hard, and requires exposing the bones of a process, looking under the skin, prodding the guts of the product. Such intense scrutiny could damage the process and the artists involved.

Which is not to say that a few gentle attempts were not made. They were, and they were met with defensiveness and rationalization.

Michael Greyeyes, who time and again exhibited his capacity for critical thinking and big picture visioning, began the discussion by introducing the notion of tropes in any given work. He acknowledged that the explorations in *Making Treaty 7* were “occurring in a good way” and that, as an audience member, he had the sense that the company was “coming together to do something good,”

but he also expressed his own discomfort with the fact that the character he was most attracted to was Colonel James Macleod, because he was more complex and multidimensional than any of the First Nations characters. He expressed a concern about “hidden agendas and unconscious biases”.

Sandra Laronde immediately reminded the assembly at this point that the purpose of the discussion was to discuss methodology, and not to critique the presentation, but Michael’s point seemed to be that he did not feel that it was even possible to unpack the methodology without addressing the inequities in the production. What methodology leads to complex settler characters and simple, noble, clownish First Nations ones?

The artists actually unintentionally exposed the methodology in their explanation of the project, citing “group dramaturgy” and asserting that the First Nations artists had directed themselves. Blake Brooker, the nominal director of the project, asserted that the artists themselves decided what stories they wanted to tell. Further, he himself identified the inequity inherent in the fact that the character of James Macleod benefits from both the historical documentation as well as from the skill and talent of his animator, who is the former poet laureate of Calgary, Kris Demeanor, versus the oral tradition from which the First Nations artists are working. What was not expressed was the reluctance to impose the same kind of rigour and artistry on those artists as was brought to Kris Demeanor and Macleod.

There is no Indigenous director on MT7, although Margo Kane’s question, “Let me ask the obvious: who is the Aboriginal Director of this project?” prompted Michael Green to state their intention to bring Michelle Thrush on board. Collette Brennan from the Australia Council for the Arts probed a bit further, asking who was “the editor or the person guiding,” once the artists brought the stories they wanted to tell into the space. Rachael Maza acknowledged the meeting of cultural protocols, but suggested that Indigenous artists also “ need to have the artistic expertise. The overseeing control and empowerment of the storytelling process needs to be an expert artistic indigenous voice.”

The thing I felt I heard was that the methodology that we were supposed to be discussing separate from the content was in fact the thing that was an obstruction to the work, but there was no way to discuss that in the air. Is it possible to investigate methodology in isolation from the product created by that methodology?

What was achieved by the showing of *Making Treaty 7* and the subsequent discussion? I do not feel that it represented current contemporary Indigenous practice in any way; for that I would point to Monique Mojica or Michael Greyeyes or Jani Lauzon. Was the intention to show the Listeners, who represent institutions and organizations with power and resources, how to make effective partnerships with Indigenous artists? For that I would point to Tara Beagan's company Article 11, Cliff Cardinal's Cardinal/Kantor Productions, Marie Clements' red diva projects. For an investigation of methodology, how about Turtle Gals, Spiderwoman, or the Full Circle Ensemble?

-Co-Curator Yvette Nolan



Herbie Barnes & Monique Mojica



Rachael Maza

The Canon – is there one? In, out, irrelevant?

“Ritual and Ceremony are our canonical work.” – Jani Lauzon

Jani Lauzon moderated the 4th session; she kicked off with findings from preparatory discussions with peers:

“When I say the word Canon, what do you think about? Only two of them responded with Theatre Canon, and the others all thought it meant the weapon.”

“Ritual and Ceremony are our canonical work” – Jani Lauzon

This set the tone and the course for the rest of the session. Language in its various permutations is central to what all of us do in the theatre. It became manifestly clear “canon” is not productive language for these Indigenous performance-makers. But before it was dismissed completely, the session was respectfully thorough in its interrogation of the term. It became apparent that for many, thinking about canon and using it as a term was simply a way of communicating with institutional culture.

Jani came to the session with a power point presentation that included a very long list of Indigenous works. This list grew ever more as a result of this session and the amalgamation of several lists can now be found at the end of this report. It is incredibly exciting: An opportunity to see a breadth of work at a glance. Amazing.

First companies were Northern Delights out of Sioux Lookout in 1980. Native Earth followed in 1982 and then Debaj in 1984.

Questions that arose throughout were:

What makes it canon material? The appearance in broadly used anthology? Being on a course list at university? In reference books? In official histories? In other reference books? If you are in "the canon" what is the criteria? Quality? Production history? Those more often produced seem to lean towards better probability of becoming "canonical". Being published, in local, national, and international anthologies?

Thoughts as to how to strengthen position of Indigenous Works

Curricula. They need to be put on the course lists by people who have the power to do so. Scholarly publishing like the big national and international reference sources from the dominant publishers of history of criticism. Awards are still from dominant culture, mainly male and literary scholars.

The creation of a Canon has been something that Daniel David Moses has tried to avoid. He's been the editor of the Oxford anthology of Canadian work. "The question of quality goes into this. This is the most contemporary work you will study in school, they are living artists who are still working. Establishing Canon puts the emphasis on work that has been done and is accepted."

"When I say the word Canon, what do you think about? ... the others all thought it meant the weapon." Jani Lauzon

Canons are tools for policing and excluding. Depending on the nature of the canon, it could mean inclusion equals tokenism. When there is one flag or one sign of the other. We tend to privilege the literary at the expense of the theatrical. Plays that are considered literary are more accepted.

A great anecdote about expectations from the dominant culture:

James Buller, who founded the Association for Native Development in the Performing and Visual Arts (ANDPVA) was determined to stage a play that was “written, produced, directed, and performed by Native People.” Buller arranged for the production to be performed at the Sixth International Amateur Theatre Association Festival in Monaco in 1977. They were not well-received, because they “did not bring their feathers and their furs and their drums”.

Margo Kane: “The way the system has presented itself to us, theatre creators ... at a certain point the system has failed us. We are looking to include people who don’t want to write things down in a certain way.”

“What are the politics of canon building? Canon building resembles nation-building, and we all know how well that is going.” I cannot remember who said this at The Summit, but it got an enormous laugh.

Rachael Maza was quoting someone from her home when she said, “‘History will be kind to me because I will write it’ - We write the list and determine what is put on the list. It becomes what people can draw from.”

There was a sense of building strength in this session. Not only was the notion of canon examined and persuasively debunked, but a new name was brought forward and a compendium of works was gathered together under its roof.

The Session provided us with more successful language: “A Body of Work”.

- Sarah Garton Stanley



Sandra Laronde, Brian Calliou & Daniel David Moses



Ryan Cunningham & Jillian Keiley

Synthesis – What would an Indigenous Study look like?

Watershed. It's a word that Michael Greyeyes used in relation to this moment, this final session at The Summit. Watershed: a transition moment, a time or place when the current changes. Does the current change as a result of The Summit?

When the Listeners finally had the opportunity to speak, were invited to speak, they did not leap to offer solutions, or suggest ways to fix things. Several of the Listeners spoke – as they had outside the sessions, in the informal gatherings – about how differently they listened when they knew they were not expected to have the answers. They listened to the ends of sentences, to the ends of thoughts, instead of dropping out to construct responses they knew would be expected of them. Michael Greyeyes commented on what a gift it was to speak to people who were actually listening. Margo noted the transformative nature of listening.

When Listeners did speak in this session, it was more discussion than statement. Jillian Keiley responded to questions about what she was taking away from The Summit. She confessed that upon inheriting her predecessor, Peter Hinton's initiative to include First Nations work at the NAC, she felt under-equipped, with a meager comprehension of Indigenous work. She talked about how The Ark – Peter's version of The Study – had brought people from across the country together to work on an artist or a period, which in turn inspired more work to be done in those artists' communities. After The Ark, people understood the artist or the period more clearly and so could produce it more widely.

Is this an anticipated outcome of The Study? That seems to be the implication, but perhaps that is too hopeful. Is the watershed the division between understanding and not understanding Indigenous performance, or is it the moment of recognition of just how much you don't understand, from content to form to practice to history to worldview?

Participants came to the Summit with distinct agendas, but one of the NAC's stated purposes was to help the NAC English Theatre make choices about what to include in The Study next year. The Summit generated lists of artists and works from which to choose, but also raised a number of questions about how

to make those choices. Michael Greyeyes expressed a desire that The Study examine fewer works and focus more contexts. Does that mean an examination of Indigenous practices in the rehearsal hall? Or applying an Indigenous practice – choose one! – to an existing work? Is theme a way of choosing? What themes does The Study wish to honour?

“Is The Summit the big wind that blows seeds across the country, generating productions, presentations, commissions, residencies, in meaningful and equitable ways?” Yvette Nolan

From this inward gazing, the assembly turned their focus outward, expressing the need and desire and responsibility to take the things they learned in this room back out into the larger rooms in which they work, and to understand that this was not an ending, but a beginning of a learning that needed to continue. Is this a watershed? Will we look back on The Summit as the moment when the relationship between Indigenous theatre practitioners and Canadians shifted? Is The Summit the big wind that blows seeds across the country, generating productions, presentations, commissions, residencies, in meaningful and equitable ways?

--Co-Curator Yvette Nolan

How did We Do?

The long-form answer to this question will take years to unfold. In the short term, we accomplished much. We were able to touch on all the areas we set out to discuss and we left The Summit with a heightened sense of a shared project. We have now the beginnings of an exhaustive list of Indigenous Works created in Canada. We have a strong relationship building with similarly-minded Aboriginal creators in Australia. We gained necessary knowledge surrounding protocols and practice. We have good ideas to pursue for The Study, and we left our interactions with more energy than we had arrived with. One of our key desires was that this would be a generative event. It was.

York University has expressed an interest in participating with us in the future and is looking at a curriculum revamp as a direct outcome of The Summit.

Jörn Weisbrodt wrote a compelling blog post about his time at The Summit - <http://luminatofestival.com/blogs/2014/4/>.

All the participants are interested in the next steps.



Back: Corey Payette, Cole Alvis, Laakkuluk Williamson Bathory, Michael Green, Nathan Medd, Collette Brennan, Brian Calliou, Ryan Cunningham, Herbie Barnes, Jillian Keiley, Daniel David Moses, Guylaine Normandin, Jorn Weisbrodt, Brian Quirt. **Front:** Margo Kane, Jani Lauzon, Yvette Nolan, Tara Renwick, Elder Tom Crane Bear, Sandra Laronde, Rachael Maza, Naomi Campbell, Sarah Garton Stanley, Monique Mojica

For more information about The Summit and the upcoming Study please visit our website: <http://nac-cna.ca/en/englishtheatre> You will find us under The Collaborations

The Body of Indigenous Works generated from The Summit

1. Adams, Evan & Marie Humber Clements - *Dirty Dog River*
2. Adams, Evan – *Snapshot*
3. Alianait Festival - *Tulugak*
4. Annis, Heather-Marie - *The Longest Way Around*
5. Arcan, Warren Ralph - *The Dark Virgin*
6. Arluk, Renlatta - *TUMIT*
7. Baker, Marie - *Albeit Aboriginal*
8. Barker, Keith - *The Hours That Remain*
9. Beagan T. – *A Soldier's Tale*
10. Beagan T. - *Dreary and Izzy*
11. Beagan T. - *Trans Canada*
12. Beagan T. - *free as injuns*
13. Beagan T. *In Spirit*
14. Beagan T. *The Ministry of Grace*
15. Belanger, Mariel - *A Little While*
16. Bell, John Kim – *In the Land of Spirits*
17. Bell, Kitty & King Alanis - *Education is Our Right*
18. Bobb, Columpa C. - *Creation - My Mother's Story*
19. Bobb, Columpa C. - *Dinky*
20. Braverock, Carl - *Indian Daze*
21. Buck, Sadie & Alejandro Ronceria - *Bones*
22. Burning J. - *Dog Soldier*
23. Campbell, Maria & Henry W. Daniels - *One More Time*
24. Campbell, Maria & Linda Griffiths - *Jessica*
25. Cardinal, Ben - *Bones*
26. Cardinal, Ben - *Generic Warrior & No-Name Indians*
27. Cardinal, Cliff – *Maria Gets a New Life*
28. Cardinal, Cliff – *Stitch*
29. Cardinal, Cliff – *Huff*
30. Charlette , Kennetch - *The Sweat*
31. Cheechoo, Shirley - *Moose River Crossing*
32. Cheechoo, Shirley - *Path With No Moccasins*
33. Cheechoo, Shirley - *The River Of Life*
34. Cheechoo, Shirley -*Shadow People*
35. Cheechoo, Shirley & Greta - *Your Dream Was Mine*
36. Cheechoo, Shirley & King, Alanis - *Nothing Personal*
37. Chiang, George & Jonathan Fisher - *Dances With Gold Dust*
38. *Chinook Winds*
39. Chocolate Woman Collective - *Chocolate Woman Dreams The Milky Way*
40. Clements, Marie - *Burning Vision*
41. Clements, Marie - *Copper Thunderbird*
42. Clements, Marie – *The Edward Curtis Project*
43. Clements, Marie – *The Road Forward*
44. Clements, Marie - *Tombs of the Vanishing Indian*
45. Clements, Marie - *Urban Tattoo*
46. Command, Janice - *Manabouzhou and the Wolves*
47. Dandurand, Joseph A. – *Shake*
48. Dandurand, Joseph A. – *No Totem For My Story*
49. Dandurand, Joseph A. - *Please Do Not Touch The Indians*

50. Dandurand, Joseph A. - Chili and His Day of Glory
51. Dandurand, Joseph A. - Sell Fish.
52. Dandurand, Joseph A. - Th'owxiya the Hungry Feast Dish
53. Daniels, Greg - Four Horses
54. Daniels, Greg - Percy's Edge
55. Debassige, Diane - Judgments Too Severe
56. Debassige, Diane - First Love
57. Dieter, Connie - Yvonne's Playground
58. Dieter, Mark - RRAP
59. Dieter, Mark - The Pursuit of Indian Hollywood
60. Dietz, Steven - The Remembering
61. Dennis, Darrell - Tales of an Urban Indian
62. Dennis, Darrell - The Trickster of Third Avenue East
63. Denomme-Welch, Spy - Exit Eagle Eye
64. Denomme-Welch, Spy & Catherine Magowan - Giiwedín
65. Dudoward, Val - Teach me the ways of the Sacred Circle
66. Dumont, Dawn - Fancy Dancer
67. Dumont, Dawn - Four Directions
68. Dumont, Dawn - Hamlet
69. Dumont, Dawn - Nicimis
70. Dumont, Dawn - Spirited Angels
71. Dumont, Dawn - Stalker
72. Durand, Yves Sioui & Catherine Joncas - Ukuamaq
73. Elliot, Cathy - Aluasa'sit
74. Elter, Sheldon - Metis Mutt
75. Eshkibok, Gloria May - Cyclops Beauty
76. Favel F. - Governor of the Dew
77. Favel F. - The Learning
78. Favel, F. - Lady of Silences
79. Fisher L. - School of Hardknocks
80. Fleming N. - Red n White
81. Fobister W. - Agokwe
82. Fobister W. - Medicine Boy
83. Francis M. - The Bush Painter
84. Frazier A. & Kelleher M. - Iron Mountain
85. Gould G. - Eagleheart
86. Greyeyes, Michael & Floyd Favel - Buffalo Jump
87. Greyeyes, M. - Nohkom
88. Gummerson P. - Is There Bingo in Heaven
89. Gummerson P. - Wawatay
90. Guno L. - Bunk #7
91. Highway R. - New Song, New Dance
92. Highway T. - Annie and the Old One
93. Highway T. - A Ridiculous Spectacle in One Act
94. Highway T. - Caribou Song
95. Highway T. - Ernestine Shuswap Gets Her Trout
96. Highway T. - I Have Seen the Giant
97. Highway T. - Pimootewin
98. Highway T. - Rose
99. Highway T. - The Large Tit
100. Highway T. - The Postmistress
101. Highway T. - The Rez Sisters

102. Highway T. - *The Sage, The Dancer & The Fool*
103. Innuinuit Theatre Company/Nalujuk Players- *Braindead*
104. Isaac M. - *I Know Where the North Is*
105. Ivins T. - *Time Stands Still*
106. James A. - *Yanagai! Yanagai!*
107. Jensen L. - *The Shaman of Waz*
108. Jocko, Esther - *The Thunderbird Children*
109. Jocko, Esther - *Lupi, The Great White Wolf*
110. Joe J.B. - *Edge of the Circle*
111. Joe J.B. - *Ravens*
112. John - *The Forester*
113. Johnson F. - *Salt Baby*
114. Kahawi Dance Theatre - *The Honouring*
115. Kahawi Dance Theatre- *TransMigration*
116. Kam Lab Theatre/NEPA- *Native Images in Transition*
117. Kane M. - *Confessions of an Indian Cowboy*
118. Kane M. - *Moonlodge*
119. Kane M. - *Reflections in the Medicine Wheel*
120. Kane M. - *The River Home*
121. Keeshig-Tobias , Lenore - *Word Magic*
122. Keeshig-Tobias , Lenore - *Quest for Fire*
123. King A. - *Lovechild*
124. King A. - *The Daphne Odijig Art Show*
125. King A. - *If Jesus Met Nanabush*
126. King A. - *The Tommy Prince Story*
127. King A. - *The Manitoulin Incident*
128. King B. - *Wolfe in Camp*
129. King B.- *Evening At the Warbonnet*
130. King, T *Coyote Solstice 6*
131. Lakevold D. & Racine D. - *Stretching Hide*
132. LaRiviere, Wayne - *Pewase-nakwun*
133. Lauzon J, Merasty B, Mojica M, & Perez F. - *A Savage Equilibrium*
134. Lauzon J. - *I Call Myself Princess*
135. Lauzon J. - *On the Toad to Freedom*
136. Lawrenchuk M. - *Big Bear*
137. Lemay H. - *Return Upriver*
138. Lewis, Larry - *New Voices Woman*
139. Linklater L. - *Justice*
140. Linklater L. & Patti Flather - *60 Below*
141. Loring, K. - *Where the Blood Mixes*
142. Loyie L. - *Ora Pro Nobis (Pray For Us)*
143. Luna J. - *In My Dreams Articles*
144. Luna J. - *In My Dreams*
145. Mahoney M. - *Overnight*
146. Mahto C. - *Blues for Franklin Avenue*
147. Manitowabi, Darrel - *Lost Warrior*
148. Mason T. - *Diva Ojibway*
149. Matthew P. - *Juliet igwa Romeo The Chief's Son*
150. Matthews P. - *The Tempest (adaptation)*
151. McIntyre D. - *Circle Games*
152. Mcleod J. - *Diary of a Crazy Boy*
153. McMahan R. - *Cousins*

154. Medicine S. - Big Shot
155. Menard, Andrea – The Velvet Devil
156. Merasty W. - Fireweed
157. Merasty W. - Godly's Divinia
158. Merasty W. - Going Through Deja Vu
159. Miguel M. - Trail of the Otter
160. Milliken B. - Storm Child
161. Misquadis R. - A Living Legend
162. Mojica, Monique. – Princess Pocahontas and the Blue Spots
163. Morris, Jim – Son of Ayash
164. Morrisseau M. - Indians For Sale
165. Moses D. - Almighty Voice and his Wife
166. Moses D. - Big Buck City
167. Moses D. - Coyote City
168. Moses D. - The Moon and Dead Indians
169. Moses D. & Millan J. - Red River
170. Moses D. Daniel - Brebeuf's Ghost
171. Moses D. Daniel - de Winter's Tale
172. Moses D. Daniel - Kyotopolis
173. Moses D. Daniel - Songs of Love and Medicine
174. Moses D. Daniel - Songs of Medicine
175. Mosioner B. - A Little Black Cat and a Little White Rat
176. Mosionier B. - Night of the Trickster
177. Miguel M. - Red Mother
178. Minika, Amie Lynn – Broken Snowshoe Moon
179. Murray J. M. - A Very Polite Genocide
180. NEPA- Who am I?
181. NEPA - Double Take/A Second Look
182. NEPA - Clown Trickster's Workshop
183. NEPA – Death of a Chief
184. NEPA - Give them a Carrot for as long as the Sun Is Green
185. NEPA – Native Images in Transition
186. Nepinak D. - BBQ
187. Nepinak D. - Coo-Coosh
188. Nepinak R. D. - The Crisis in Oka, Manitoba
189. Nolan Y. - A Marginal Man
190. Nolan Y. – BLADE
191. Nolan Y. - Annie Mae's Movement
192. Nolan Y. – Child
193. Nolan Y. - Savage
194. Nolan Y. - Skin Deep
195. Nolan Y. The Unplugging
196. Nolan, Y. - from thine eyes
197. Nowra L. - Crow
198. Odjig A. - The Tommy Price Story
199. Olson M. & Ravensbergen L. - The Place Between
200. Ondinnok - Iwouskea et Tawiskaron –
201. Ondinnok - Opitowap, Sakipitcikan et Mantokasowin
202. Ondinnok - Le Porter des peines du monde
203. Payette, C. – Children of God
204. Pechawis A. - Talking to My Horse, Whistling the Garry Owen
205. Peeteetuce C. - In the Midst of Memory

206. Peeteetuce C. – Popcorn Elder
 207. Peltier D. - A Red Shoe Tale
 208. Peltier K. - Stuck Between 2 Women
 209. Pepin and Arnatsiaq - Uqquaq, The Shelter
 210. Prudat, PJ – Reunir
 211. Ramirez V. – Smoke
 212. Raven Spirit – Gathering Light
 213. Raven Spirit – Evening in Paris
 214. Red Sky Performance – Tono
 215. Reid, Stephen & Poushinsky M. - Clarence Almost Home
 216. Ronceria A. - The Jaguar Project
 217. Ross I. - FareWel
 218. Ruffo A. - A Windigo Tale
 219. Ruffo A. - Ghost Woman
 220. Ruffo A. - Grey Owl The Mystery of Archie Belaney
 221. Ruffo A. - The Visit
 222. Scurvey S. - River Bank
 223. Seabrook M. - 20th Century Indian Boy
 224. Sergel C. - Black Elk Speaks
 225. Sewell A. - Rezolutions
 226. Simpson B. - Skyland
 227. Sinclair B. - Murdo's Story
 228. Sinclair B. & Waweyekisik Theatre - Sad But True
 229. Smith S. - Kahawi
 230. Smyth Z. - The Tale of the Four Directions
 231. Spiderwoman Theater – Sun, Moon and Feather
 232. Spirit Song - Dawn
 233. Starr E. - Ghost Dance (Double Sided)
 234. Stella R. - White Buffalo Calf Woman
 235. Tanguay N. - Hand to Hand
 236. Tangen Rulan – Walking at the edge of Water
 237. Tarbescu E. - Molly's Boots
 238. Taylor D.H. - Dead White Writer on the Floor
 239. Taylor D.H. - alterNATIVE
 240. Taylor D.H. - Four Hundred Kilometers
 241. Taylor D.H. - Girl Who Loved Her Horses
 242. Taylor D.H. - GOD AND THE INDIAN
 243. Taylor D.H. - In a World Created by a Drunken God
 244. Taylor D.H. - Only Drunks and Children Tell the Truth
 245. Taylor D.H. - Someday
 246. Taylor D.H. - The Baby Blues
 247. Taylor D.H. - The Berlin Blues
 248. Taylor D.H. - The Bootlegger Blues
 249. Taylor D.H. - The Rise and Fall of the City of Mahagonny
 250. Taylor D.H. – Toronto at Dreamer's rock
 251. Taylor D.H. - Toronto@Dreamer's rock.com
 252. Taylor D.H - Heat Lightning
 253. Tisiga J. - Late Night with Grey Owl
 254. Tontos Nephews - Ever Sick!
 255. Trujillo R. - Forbidden GODESses
 256. Tunooniq Theatre - Changes
 257. Turtle Gals Performance Ensemble - The Scrubbing Project

- 258. Turtle Gals Performance Ensemble - *The Triple Truth*
- 259. Turtle Gals Performance Ensemble - *The Only Good Indian*
- 260. Twigg, Troy Emery - *Assimilating Richard*
- 261. Two-Rivers E. Donald - *Old Indian Trick*
- 262. Villeneuve A. - *Mind's Own Will*
- 263. Wallace Y. - *Smothered Sweetly*
- 264. Welsh J. - *Sacred Places.*
- 265. William K. - *Suicide Notes*
- 266. Williams K. - *DESERTERS*
- 267. Williams K. - *Gordon Winter*
- 268. Williams K. - *Project 7*
- 269. Williams K. - *Three Little Birds*
- 270. Williams K. - *Thunderstick*
- 271. Williams K. *Bannock Republic*
- 272. Williams K. *Cafe Daughter*
- 273. Wiseman J. - *Full Circle*
- 274. Worn Staff, Sadie - *Shadow Warrior*
- 275. Yellow Robe Jr. W.S. - *The Independence of Eddie Rose*
- 276. Yellow Robe Jr. W.S.- *A Stray Dog*
- 277. Young-Ing G. - *Full Circle*