

Media Release: January 21, 2013. Please add to your listings/announcements website: www.thewreckingball.ca Media Inquiries: **Waawaate Fobister** phone: 416 553 9030 email: contactthewreckingball@gmail.com



Wrecking Ball Toronto #14: Idle No More

Current political theatre ripped from the zeitgeist and thrown upon the stage by:
Waawaate Fobister, Falen Johnson, Andrew Moodie, Yvette Nolan & Jordan Tannahill

Hosted by **Andre Morriseau** with Hoop Dance performance by **Arik Pipestem** & Song Performance by **Cathy Elliot**

Stage managed by Brooklyn Doran with lighting and sound assistance by Andy Moro.

January 27, 2013 @ 8pm - Aki Studio Theatre at Daniels Spectrum 585 Dundas Street E. Toronto

The Idle No More movement has risen in resistance to the Harper Government's **Bill C-45, which unilaterally infringes on Aboriginal and treaty rights protected by the Constitution Act (1982)**. The movement continues to grow in new and unexpected ways: hunger strikes, days of action, drum circles, blockades, letters, editorials, online comments and acts of theatre. Motivated not by public opinion polls, but a desire to bring real and meaningful change to **a country that ranks 6th in development globally and 66th for its indigenous people**, #IdleNoMore asks the same question posed to Canada by a 2012 United Nations panel of human rights experts: **"How long will this be ongoing?"**

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At Wrecking Ball 14, a selection of Toronto's most relevant and daring playwrights will have one week to create a play, and directors and performers will have one week to rehearse works connected to the Idle No More movement and the questions and issues it has raised.

Founded by director Ross Manson and playwright Jason Sherman in 2003, **The Wrecking Ball has been the premiere event in Canada for showcasing political works for a decade.** As the birthplace of new plays by Hannah Moscovitch, Michael Healey, Roland Schimmelpfennig, Erin Shields, Judith Thompson, Colleen Wagner, David Yee, Bea Pizano, Tara Beagan, and Sky Gilbert to name a few - there is no other event like it challenging theatre artists to respond to and address the *vox populi*.

On the occasion of the previous two Federal elections The Wrecking Ball went National; with 'Wrecking Balls' hosted by theatre artists in most major cities across the country. **In both 2008 and 2011 these pan-Canadian dramatic responses to our politics garnered widespread national media attention.** The Wrecking Ball is no longer a Toronto phenomenon, but an autonomous theatrical movement joined by a desire to explore current political questions, issues, desires and dreams upon the stage.

Wrecking Ball 14 Creators:

Yvette Nolan (Algonquin) is a playwright, dramaturg and director. Her plays include *BLADE*, *Job's Wife*, *Annie Mae's Movement*, *Scattering Jake* and *The Unplugging*. Directing credits include *Tombs of the Vanishing Indian*, *Salt Baby*, *A Very Polite Genocide*, *Death of a Chief*, *Tales of An Urban Indian*, *The Unnatural and Accidental Women*, *Annie Mae's Movement* (Native Earth), *The Ecstasy of Rita Joe* (WCTC/National Arts Centre), *The Only Good Indian...*, *The Triple Truth* (Turtle Gals). From 2003-2011, she served as the Artistic Director of Native Earth Performing Arts. She is currently working on a book about Native theatre in Canada.

Andrew Moodie - Born in Ottawa, actor, director, writer Andrew Moodie began his career on stage. His first professional performance was in a production of David Fennario's *Nothing to Lose*, produced and directed by Zack Crane. The play was performed at the legendary Lafayette House. From that performance he was able to launch a career performing in many of Canada's most respected theatres, including The Great Canadian Theatre Company, the Factory Theatre, Theatre Passe Muraille, LKTYP, Second City, and the Canadian Stage Company. He garnered a Dora nomination for Best Male Performance for his rendition of *Othello*, and he won a Dora award for his performance in Roseneath's Theatre's production of David Craig's *Health Class*. In 1995, he launched a successful playwriting career when the Factory Theatre produced his play *Riot*. The production won the prestigious Chalmers award for Best New Production. Since then, he has written several other plays including *A Common Man's Guide to Loving Women*, *Oui*, *The Lady Smith*, *The Real McCoy*, and *Toronto the Good*.

Jordan Tannahill is a playwright, theatre director, and filmmaker who runs an alternative arts space called Videofag out of an old barbershop in Kensington Market with his partner William.

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Jordan creates plays, multimedia performances, and happenings through his company Suburban Beast. His short films have screened across Canada and around the world.

Waawaate Fobister - is an award-winning actor and playwright. In 2009, his production of *Agokwe* — a one-man play, which he wrote and starred in — won six Dora Awards. He is also a choreographer, dancer and producer. A proud Anishnaabe from Grassy Narrows First Nation, he is a graduate and winner of the 'Distinguished Performance — Male' award from Humber College's Theatre Performance Program. Waawaate has received grants from the Canada Council for the Arts, National Aboriginal Achievement Foundation, and several from the Ontario Arts Council. Credits include: Toronto at *Dreamers Rock* (Magnus Theatre); *A Very Polite Genocide* (Native Earth Performing Arts); *Agokwe* (Buddies in Bad Times Theatre); *Pawaajigun* (Nish); *Death of a Chief* (Native Earth/National Arts Centre); *The Rez Sisters* (Theatre North West); *Schoolhouse* (Blyth Festival); *The Passage* (Pu-Kawiss Productions); National Artist Program (Canada Winter Games 2007 – Whitehorse).

Falen Johnson - is Mohawk and Tuscarora from Six Nations. She is an actor, playwright and emerging dramaturg. She is a graduate of George Brown Theatre School. Selected theatre credits include: *The Only Good Indian* with Turtle Gals Performance Ensemble, *The Triple Truth*, *Savage*, *Strong Medicine*, *Death of a Chief*, *A Very Polite Genocide*, and *Tombs of the Vanishing Indian* all with Native Earth Performing Arts. She has also been seen in *The Ecstasy of Rita Joe* a co-production between Western Canada Theatre and The National Arts Centre. Recently Falen was seen in *The River* with Nakai Theatre as well as *Tout Comme Elle* a co-production between Necessary Angel and Luminato. Falen has just completed a performance of *Where the Blood Mixes* with Saskatchewan Native Theatre.

Erik "Arik" Pipestem is a First Nations Performer, Dancer and Choreographer with many years of experience performing on stage including shows such as Cirque Du Soleil: TOTEM, So You Think You Can Dance Canada, and The World Championships Of Performing Arts in Hollywood, California. Arik is professionally trained in many dance styles including: Hip-hop, Latin, Contemporary, Combat Jazz and every style of Native Pow Wow Dance. Arik is world renowned for his exceptional skills in the First Nations "Hoop Dance" going as far as creating a whole new form of the said "Hoop Dance" calling it "X-H-T" ie: Extraordinary Hoop Technique. Arik would like to eventually start his own performance company grounded in diverse expressions of the human imagination through performance, dance, circus and storytelling.

Cathy Elliott (Cormier) is an Acadian / status Mi'kmak member of the Indian Brook Band in Nova Scotia. This summer Cathy was the Aboriginal Liason and writer of new Aboriginal language and music for New World Theatre Projects' *The Tempest* in Cupids, NL. directed by Jeannette Lambermonte-Morey. She also played Ariel opposite Greg Malone as a Beothuk Spirit Helper. She was a member of the cast that premiered Andy Jones' Newfoundland version of *Tartuffe* directed by Jillian Keiley. The summer of 2011 was filled with firsts: She wrote and directed the first original All Aboriginal Musical at the Confederation Centre in

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Charlottetown, PEI. *The Talking Stick* was performed for Will and Kate during their visit and telecast live worldwide. She wrote and directed the documentary *Fill My Hollow Bones*, for DAREart's pilot Aboriginal Arts program, Nee-tum-ochi-bek, which premiered at the TIFF Centre.

Andre Morriseau (Ojibway) is an enthusiastic advocate and ambassador for Aboriginal arts, culture and public affairs. A member of the Fort William First Nation (Thunder Bay) where he maintains a home, Mr. Morriseau is based in Toronto. Over the past decade Andre has served on numerous boards of directors including the Ontario Arts Council (OAC), Centre for Aboriginal Media (CAM), ImagineNATIVE Film and Media Arts Festival, Native American Journalist's Association (NAJA), Aboriginal Voices Radio Network (AVR) and the Toronto Council Fire Native Cultural Centre. In 2003 Mr. Morriseau was chosen as one of the first three recipients of Toronto's Aboriginal Affairs Award.

Andre has gained a reputation for promoting and supporting Aboriginal arts and public affairs. As former host of Nation to Nation on Aboriginal Voices Radio, CKAV 106.5 FM, and UrbaNative at CIUT University of Toronto, he shared countless stories of Indigenous peoples and their experiences. For five exciting years Andre worked as the Secretariat for the National Aboriginal Achievement Foundation (NAAF). He is the current Chair of the James Bartleman Aboriginal Youth Creative Writing Awards Jury and presently is the Media Relations Officer for the Chiefs of Ontario (COO).

Brought to you by Waawaate Fobister and Native Earth Performing Arts – Meegwetch! -- and The Wrecking Ball Toronto Crew: Ruth Madoc-Jones, Michael Wheeler, Julie Tepperman, Nina Lee Aquino, Aaron Willis, Ravi Jain, Alan Dilworth.

The Wrecking Ball 14: Idle No More is ONE PERFORMANCE ONLY.

January 27, 2013 2012, Aki Studio Theatre at Daniels Spectrum. 585 Dundas Street E. Toronto
Box Office opens at 7:00pm Show starts at 8:00pm.

Pay what you can. No advanced sales.

This event is a fundraiser for the Actors' Fund of Canada

thewreckingball.ca