

NOZHEM: FIRST PEOPLES' PERFORMANCE SPACE &
PUBLIC ENERGY PRESENT:



Photo: Benjamin Laird Arts & Photo

Cheri Maracle

PADDLE SONG

March 24 & 25, 2023
Nozhem: First Peoples'
Performance Space
Nogojiwanong, Ontario



PublicEnergy.ca
PERFORMING ARTS

PADDLE SONG

Cheri Maracle

Playwrights: Dinah Christie and Tom Hill

Original Direction: Pam Mathews

Directors of remounts: Jani Lauzon, Dinah Christie, Columpa Bob

Performed by: Cheri Maracle

Production/Stage Manager: Susan D Currie

Slides: Trevor Schwellnus

Original Music & Lyrics: Dinah Christie

Musical Arrangements: Mark Rutherford and Justin Burgess, Brendan Peltier,
Marc Nadjiwan-Merilainen

Costume Design: Naomi Martin

Technical Director: Don White

Theatre Coordinator: Lee Bolton

Cultural Coordinator: Sheri Smith

Nozhem Assistants: Hannah McCammon and Shenoa Poirier

Artistic Director: Jenn Cole

Associate Artistic Producer: William Kingfisher

Run time : 75 minutes - Inclusive of a 10 minute intermission

Special Thanks:

Peterborough Theatre Guild, Andy Carroll, Michael Morritt, Lisa Dixon, Ziysah von Bieberstein
and Donna Spencer at the Firehall Arts Centre in Vancouver
for donating valuable time in the rehearsal studio

Paddle Song began as a musical for Sunshine Players, written by Dinah Christie, well over a decade ago. She and Tom V. Hill then co-wrote another version in 2009. This new *Paddle Song* would have a long life. It was first performed by Cheri Maracle, as part of the Faithfully Yours, E. Pauline Johnson exhibit, at the Woodland Cultural Centre in 2009. The play then went on to be performed at venues all over Southern Ontario. *Paddle Song* went through a re-write workshop directed and dramaturged by Jani Lauzon, and continued to shine in Calgary at the High Performance Rodeo, 2016, where Cheri was nominated for Best Solo Performance. It has been to Norway, at the Riddu Riddu Festival, and as far as India, as well. Most recently *Paddle Song* had a very well received two-week run at Vancouver's Firehall Arts Centre in November 2022, and is set again to be staged in their next season, accompanied by a new alternate E. Pauline Johnson piece, written by Columpa Bob, which Cheri will perform.

Cheri is very pleased to bring *Paddle Song* to the beautiful Nozhem space. Nia:Wen

NOZHEM is the Ojibwe word, which denotes the female bear. We've chosen this animal to represent our space because she embodies the characteristics of transformation, balance and knowledge, which are essential components of Indigenous way of knowing.

NOZHEM is very close to the earth, and therefore she knows the plants and their medicine properties. She's the one animal that fasts all winter, thus in that way, she undergoes a transformation. She gives birth and in doing so, in bringing forth new life, she achieves a sense of balance. She's very protective of her young and in this way, very similar to the human being. Because of her knowledge of medicine plants her physical and spiritual strength and her resilience, she is respected as a healing spirit in our community.

In theatre there is transformation which takes place as actors take on specific roles, but there is another transformation which occurs within the individual actor as they find their own healing through their personal creative expression. There is also healing for the audience as they empathize greater awareness of the human condition and the situations of others in society. Thus it is fitting for our Indigenous performance space to honour that spirit of the bear with her name NOZHEM.



- Edna Manitowabi

Want to watch Paddle Song again?

You can watch this production online for a limited time! As a move to strengthen inclusivity, Public Energy is putting selected programming online to serve viewers unable to attend shows in person. Find a link on the PE website, publicenergy.ca, between March 27th at 5pm and March 31st at midnight.

ABOUT PUBLIC ENERGY PERFORMING ARTS:

Public Energy Performing Arts is Peterborough's animator of dance, theatre, performance and interdisciplinary work. Since 1994 we have presented a mainstage series of artists drawn from across Canada and beyond, commissioned new work in concert with other Canadian presenters, supported the development of the local dance, theatre and performance community and nurtured audiences that are knowledgeable and passionate about the performing arts.

Public Energy works in Treaty 20 territory situated in the traditional territory of the Michi Saagiig and Chippewa Nations, collectively known as the Williams Treaties First Nations. We honour that we are in Nogojiwanong, the Anishinaabe word for "place at the end of the rapids", a gathering place where stories have been shared for millennia. We acknowledge the Indigenous people for their stewardship of these lands and we recognize our responsibility to foster respectful relationships with the water, the land, and its people. Public Energy recognizes that treaties did more harm than good, criminalizing cultural practices and displacing Indigenous people from their territories. We commit to doing all we can to repair this legacy by providing a platform for the voices and artistry of Indigenous artists to be heard and respected.

ARTIST BIOS:

Cheri Maracle is a multi-award nominated Actor/Singer/Songwriter from the Six Nations of the Grand River Territory, Ontario. She has performed on stages across Turtle Island and abroad in the last 25 years. Cheri has numerous stage, film and TV credits to her name. Some of which include: *Alaska Daily* (CTV) *Unsettled* (APTN,TVO), *The Coroner* (CBC), *The Parker Andersons* (Marble Media), *Tribal* (APTN), and *DeGrassi* (Netflix, Epitome). Cheri has appeared in stage productions: *The Unnatural and Accidental Women* (The National Arts Centre), *The Rez Sisters* (Belfry Theatre), and *The Road to Paradise* (Crow's Theatre), to name a few. Cheri performed the world premiere production of the one-person musical *Paddle Song* at Calgary's High Performance Rodeo in 2016, where she was nominated for Best Solo Performance. She performed *Paddle Song* at the Firehall Theatre in Vancouver in Fall 2022. Cheri's music can be found on iTunes.

Susan D. Currie Welcome to the show. Susan is a B.C. and Ontario-based stage manager who travels across this country of ours working in fabulous places with fabulous people. Next up she works in Kawartha Lakes District weaving her magic.

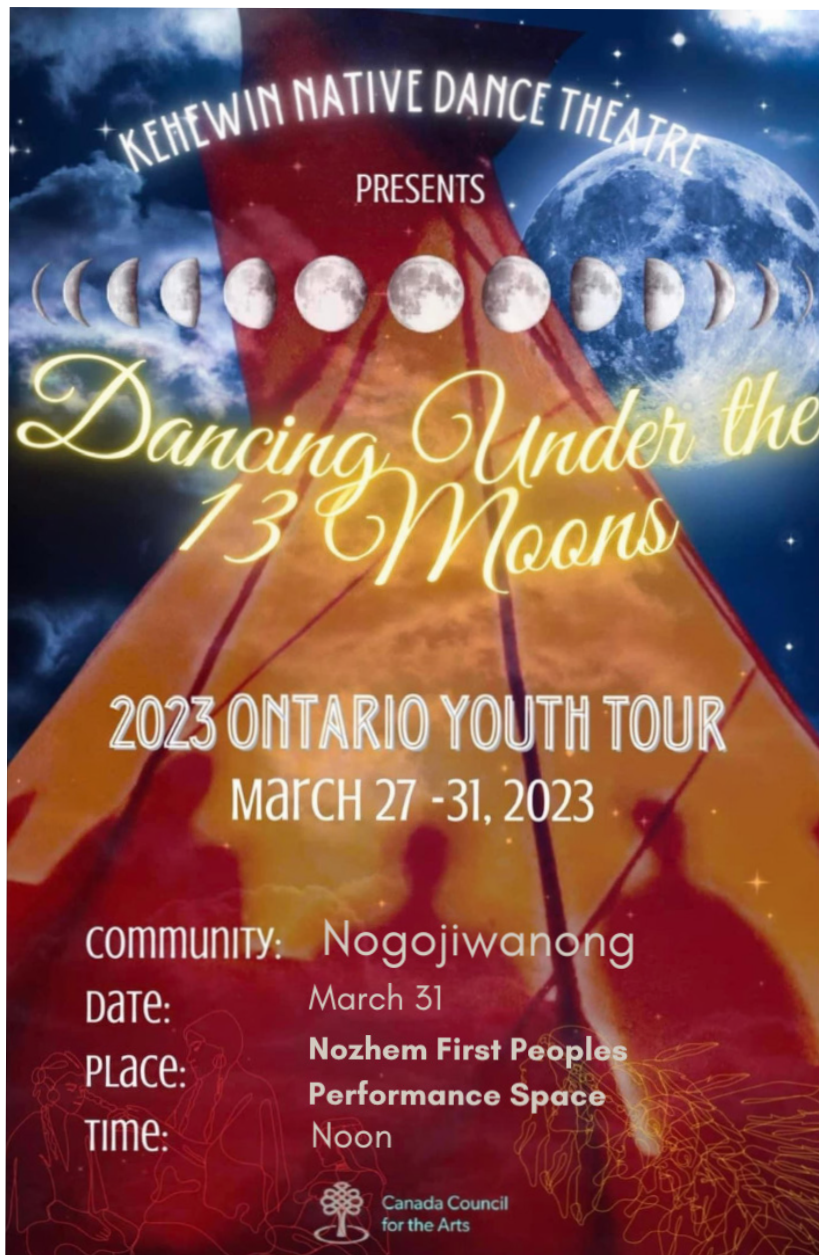


E. Pauline Johnson, also known by her Mohawk name Tekahionwake, was a trailblazing heroine, an enigmatic, ahead of her time, proud Mohawk Poet and performer of the late 1800's. The daughter of a respected Six Nations Mohawk Chief, and an English mother, Pauline embraced her heritage and fiercely challenged the stereotypes of women, and Native peoples within her work. She fearlessly toured this unrelenting countryside, with her unique stage show for over 30 years, and was published and hailed by the literati in England at a time when the literary world was ruled by white men.

Her powerful story is brought to life in *Paddle Song*, an energetic, humorous, one-hour, one-woman musical which captures the heart and journey of young Pauline, canoeing the Grand River at home on Chiefswood, her promising career just beginning, to earning her place on stages in Ontario, then Canada, the United States and Great Britain. Pauline endlessly fought for equality, acceptance, and respect as an Indigenous woman performer with a voice - in a man's literary world.

Paddle Song reflects the legacy Pauline carved out; an unparalleled mixed-blood persona that would influence Native Performers, and audiences, for decades to come. Her life's work, a masterpiece accessible to all.





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for a
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Featuring new works by: Frank Flynn, Kate Story,
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Ingram, and Anne Ryan

Wednesday, March 29th, 2023
Thursday, March 30th, 2023
Friday, March 31st, 2023
Saturday, April 1st, 2023

\$20 or pwyc

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CONTACT

email: admin@publicenergy.ca
mail: PO Box 2319 Peterborough, ON K9J 7Y8
phone: (705) 745-1788