

PUBLIC ENERGY PERFORMING ARTS PRESENTS

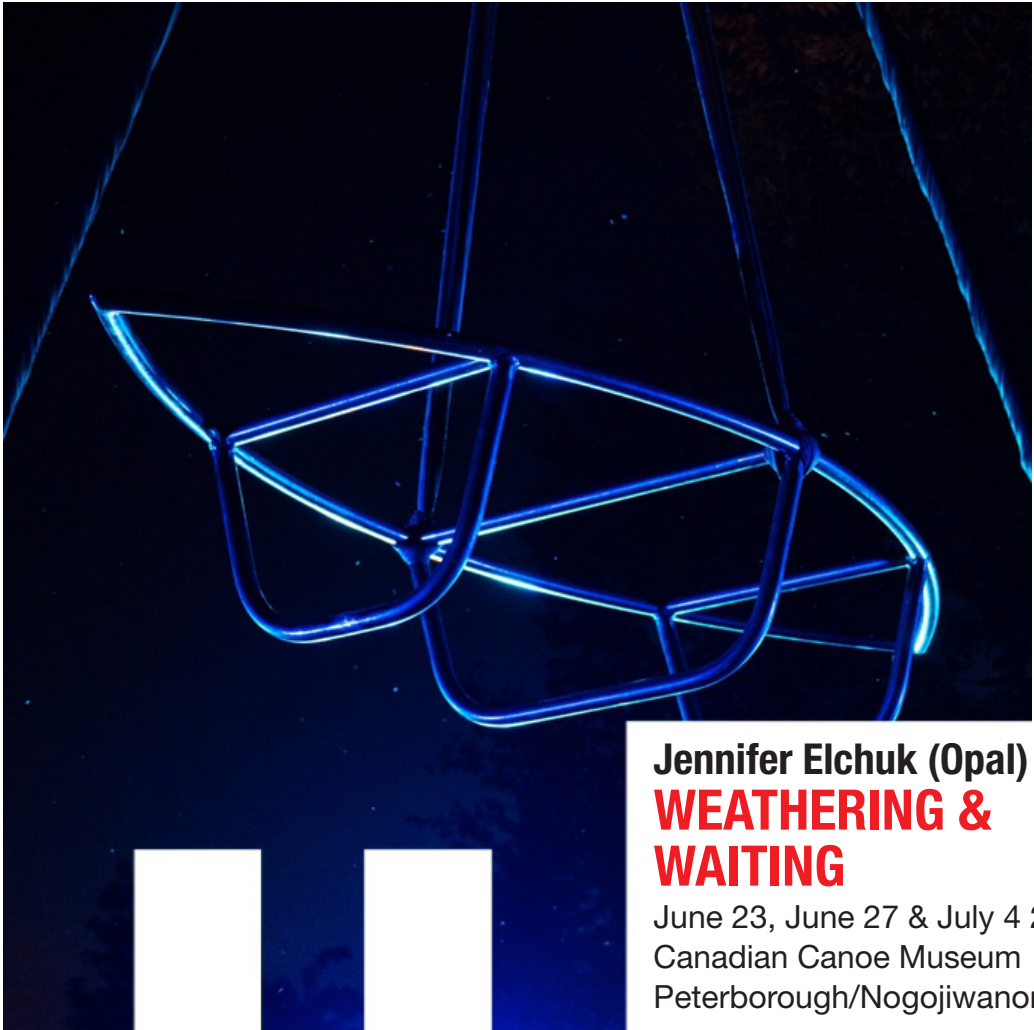


Photo: Michael Morritt

Jennifer Elchuk (Opal)
**WEATHERING &
WAITING**

June 23, June 27 & July 4 2024
Canadian Canoe Museum
Peterborough/Nogojiwanong

PublicEnergy.ca
PERFORMING ARTS

WEATHERING & WAITING

Jennifer Elchuk (Opal)

Show length: 30 minutes

Created and performed by Jennifer Elchuk (Opal)
with circus artists Jeff Cadence and Victoria Kopf
Understudy Tegan Moss

Original music by aquapher (Jared Bremner)
Lighting Design and Stage Management by Patricia Levert
with Technical Assistance from Nadarra Collette

During creation of this piece, Elchuk and her collaborators explored a new more dynamic rigging system for the aerial canoe. This opened many new technical possibilities, allowing the apparatus to spin and tip, emulating the turbulent waters of the storm narrative, and conveying themes of emotional struggle. Original music was composed in a collaborative process to reflect the same themes and emotional qualities, with movement research influencing music to the same degree as the sound influenced movement.

Weathering and Waiting began with a thematic exploration of isolation, depression, and grief, contrasted with perseverance, community and resilience during the pandemic.

The storm imagery extends these themes to include the emotional impacts of the climate crisis, facing actual storms and floods, speaking to displacement, loss, anxiety and despair.

Dramaturge Emily Hughes supported the artists in developing the narrative, movement quality and theatre techniques to express these ideas.

This work aims to move audiences to relate to the challenging emotions in this story, provoking a sense of empathy and union amidst the mental health challenges facing humanity today.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We gratefully acknowledge the support of the Canada Council for the Arts, the City of Peterborough and the Electric City Culture Council.

Special thanks to The Peterborough Academy of Circus Arts for in kind use of studio space and equipment.

Presented by Public Energy Performing Arts.

ARTIST BIOGRAPHIES

Jennifer Elchuk (Opal) is pleased to share this work which combines her passions for both circus and canoeing. The Canadian Canoe Museum was her first employer, when she moved to Nogojiwanong in 2005. The community she connected with were an important part of her journey, guiding canoe trips and backcountry adventure, experiences on the land which strongly influenced her creative practice and inspired her both as a visual and movement artist. This came full circle in 2018 when she presented her first work with her aerial canoe, The Flying Canoe, at the Canoe Museum for Artsweek Peterborough. Her recent developments with the apparatus explore a more dynamic rigging system and themes of mental health challenges.

Elchuk is a Peterborough/Nogojiwanong-based multidisciplinary artist and educator. She works with the Peterborough Academy of Circus Arts(PACA), a non-profit organization that she has been part of since its founding in 2015, instructing youth and adults, performing, and producing shows. Holding degrees in both Fine Arts and Education, Elchuk is also a graduate of Circus Instructor Training at the National Circus School. As a circus artist she performs aerial arts, fire dancing and stilt walking, in addition to costume and apparatus design. Her current projects include developing duo trapeze with Tegan Moss, leading a Circus Arts program for Indigenous communities, and finally presenting Weathering and Waiting.

Victoria Kopf is an aerial circus artist and instructor. Victoria has been training in various circus disciplines primarily with the Peterborough Academy of Circus Arts (PACA), a non-profit organization, since 2014. She began performing with PACA in 2015 and started instructing in 2021. She performs primarily in the aerial arts, having created a novel apparatus (silkeze), and stiltwalking. Victoria enjoys creating story-telling performance pieces which often explore relationships and connections.

Jeffrey Cadence is a multi-media artist currently focusing on collaborative circus performance and instruction. His acts have included the combination of dance, aerial performance and live music performance, most often with his partner Victoria Kopf. Jeffrey is also a practicing psychotherapist and often incorporates expressive arts and circus into his practice with adolescents and young adults. At various times over the past 30+ years, Jeffrey has been involved with theatre production, visual arts, live music performance (solo and in several bands) and the design and construction of custom furniture and woodworking.

Patricia Levert, originally from North Bay, Ontario, began her career as a Stage Manager in Toronto, where she gained extensive experience over 13 years and became a member of Canadian Actors Equity of Canada. In 2008, she relocated to Peterborough, expanding her expertise across theatre, dance, music, and circus arts. Patricia has excelled in lighting design, projections, set design, and dramaturgical collaboration, notably as the Technical & Production Manager at the Market Hall Performing Arts Centre since 2012.

Recent achievements include lighting design for productions like “A Hen Called Freedom” in June 2024. Patricia’s artistic versatility extends to performances such as the Little Lake Cemetery Pageant 2019 and graduation as a Social Circus Instructor from the National Circus School of Canada. She also enriches the arts community through teaching, having conducted several Stage Management workshops, nurturing aspiring stage managers in honing their skills. Patricia continues to make a significant impact on Peterborough’s cultural scene through her multifaceted contributions and dedication to artistic excellence.

Jared Bremner (aquapher) is an electronic music composer who specializes in soundscapes for dancers, circus artists and film. Beginning with piano lessons from his mother, but mainly self-taught, Bremner has been a musician all his life. He started composing music with synthesizers in 1993 under the name aquapher. He has played bass/guitar in various bands over the years living in Oshawa and Toronto, but is currently focused on producing his own electronic music. His body of work includes melodic techno, dreamy ambient soundscapes, and project-specific work for film, dance, and circus performance.

He currently resides in Peterborough Ontario where he produces original music for local performances including much of Elchuk’s body of work. He has created musical scores for award-winning filmmaker LA Alfonso’s documentaries Circus Boy and Birthmark. He recently worked collaboratively with Elchuk and other artists to compose scores to play live in response to movement scores, in No Elevator to Success for Erring on King George (2022), and to compose 23 minute score for Weathering and Waiting.

Aerial Canoe has been training circus since birth. The design for a portage-worthy water vessel has changed very little since their birch bark ancestors, brilliantly invented by the Indigenous people of Turtle Island and used for millennia before settlers started manufacturing the same form with different materials. This particular rendition was inspired by Elchuk’s personal experiences backcountry canoeing. It was designed with dimensions and structure to accommodate aerial acrobatics, and fabricated locally by City Welding Works. The aerial canoe made its debut starring in The Flying Canoe, performed at the Canadian Canoe Museum’s former site, as part of Artsweek Peterborough 2018. You may also have witnessed this apparatus in action as part of Cirquelesque 2019, Circus Sessions 2023 or Mnoominkewan 2023. This latter work, ‘Mnoomin Story’ was created and performed by the Curve Lake First Nation community as part of a circus mentorship program which aims to honour the origins of the canoe through collaborative creation between settler circus artists and the Indigenous community involved in mnoomin harvest and celebration.

Tegan Moss is a multidisciplinary circus artist who lives, works, and plays in Nogojiwanog/ Peterborough. Moss first performed for Public Energy in 2009, with notable local performance works including Erring at King George and Emergency #21. Moss and Elchuk have been collaborating to present narrative rich, mixed-media aerial works since 2012. Moss is honored to support the presentation of Weathering & Waiting.

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.

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