

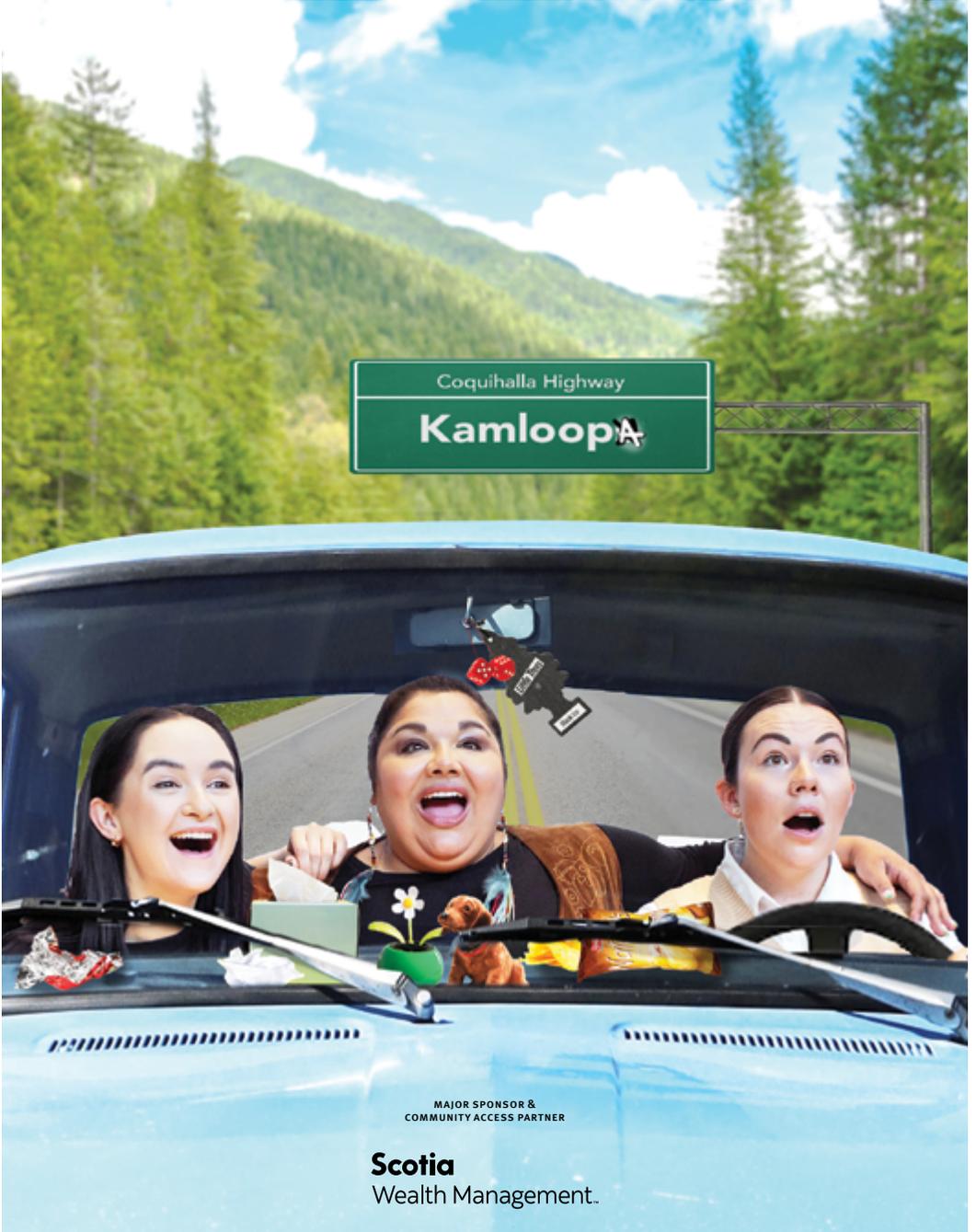
KAMLOOPA

Soulpepper

KIM SENKLIP HARVEY

**CO-PRODUCTION WITH
NATIVE EARTH PERFORMING ARTS**

**Native
Earth**
Performing Arts



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As we re-emerge from this pandemic, we recognize that things have changed since last we met in the theatre. At a time when we are re-evaluating our relationship to 'classic' theatre, now is the time to embrace new contemporary classics like *Where the Blood Mixes* and *Kamloopa*. These award-winning plays, both written in response to the lived experience of the playwrights, share unique perspectives historically not seen on all stages in this country.

Over the last few years, Soulpepper has produced three plays that originated at Native Earth.

The first was *Huff* by Cliff Cardinal, then Daniel David Moses' *Almighty Voice and His Wife* and most recently, Margo Kane's *Moonlodge* which was part of the *Around the World in 80 Plays* audio series. This is but a small sample of the many works Native Earth has developed and produced over its 40 years of existence. We are delighted to now co-produce with Soulpepper these two remarkable shows, and share these stories with both our audiences.

Indigenous stories are vital to the cultural narrative of this country, and Native Earth remains dedicated to sharing the Indigenous experience through live performance. Like the Two Row Wampum Treaty, we believe the only way to move forward in a good way, is side by side, together. These relationships allow us to better understand each other in meaningful ways. Indigenous stories matter. Indigenous lives matter.

All our relations.



Keith Barker
Outgoing Artistic
Director, Native Earth
Performing Arts



Isaac Thomas
Outgoing Managing
Director, Native Earth
Performing Arts

Welcome! It is so wonderful to have audiences back in our theatre again, and we are thrilled to share this production of *Kamloopa* with you, written and directed by Kim Senklip Harvey.

This Governor General's Award-winning play is connected in many ways to the production of *Where the Blood Mixes* by Kevin Loring, which we opened at the beginning of June. Kim actually performed in an earlier production of Kevin's play over a decade ago which ignited the fire that led to her writing and directing. Both plays are fueled by a character's desire to understand their past, culture and home. These plays have been recognized by awards at the highest level, and we are proud to have them on our stages in partnership with Native Earth Performing Arts.

Kim has said she wrote *Kamloopa* out of a craving for joy and humor. It was that very thing that drew me to the play, her celebration, her bold provocative voice and her ability to invite us to laugh with her characters through it all. In times of healing, we need laughter. These characters are grappling with immense self-discoveries and new relationships to ancestry, while on a journey across the land, we invite you on this ride with us today.

Thank you for supporting live theatre and being a part of this experience.

Enjoy the show,



Weyni Mengesha
Artistic Director,
Soulpepper Theatre Company



It's the summer of 2017, I'm driving on my traditional Syilx territories. It's a warm night and the sweetgrass aromas of my homelands are mixing with the scents of my honey oat subway when BANG! I hit a senklip (coyote) and the worlds opened up. I pulled over and the only monologue in *Kamloopa* burst out of me – verbatim. I can't describe how it came through me but I knew it was a deep encounter with the Ancestors and a significant part of *Kamloopa*.

I sat on the side of the road, in tears of joy, pain, anger and liberation knowing something died out on that road but it wasn't the coyote. I suspect I needed to crash into this truth to remember that I deserved to be alive because we live in a world, in "canada" where Indigenous women are 6 times more likely to be killed than non-Indigenous peoples, where it's normalized for Indigenous women to be taken and where canadian stages have profited off our death and dramatized our pain and oppression under imperial patriarchy for far too long.

Crashing into my animal was a calling from the other worlds to help keep Indigenous women alive and that's what *Kamloopa: An Indigenous Matriarch Story* is. It is my humble offer to ignite the power that lives within Indigenous women and peoples. This play, as I've said for many years, is my love letter to Indigenous women who deserve spaces and stories that honor the multidimensional nature of our very existence. To sit and laugh and nourish our spirits and remember we are complete, powerful and deserving of love and happiness just as we are, in this very moment.

So live, laugh, love – embody your Home Sense paraphernalia :)
I love you.

Sechanalyah, limelet,

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "Kim Senklip Harvey". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Kim Senklip Harvey
Playwright and Director of *Kamloopa*

Cast

Yolanda Bonnell

Indian Friend #1/Edith

Kaitlyn Yott

Mikaya

Samantha Brown

Kilawna, Understudy:
Mikaya and Indian Friend #1/Edith

Joelle Peters

Understudy: Kilawna

Creative Team

Kim Senklip Harvey

Playwright & Director

alaska B

Sound Designer & Composer

Kathleen Jones

Assistant Stage Manager

Joelle Peters

Assistant Director

potatoCakes_digital

Lighting, Video & Projection Designer

Pauline Shirt

Spiritual Educator

Daniela Masellis

Set Designer

Aria Evans

Choreographer
& Movement Director

Justine Manuel

n'səl'xcin Language Coach

Samantha McCue

Costume Designer

Neha Ross

Stage Manager

Production

Andy DeVries

Head Carpenter

Lisa Nighswander

Head of Props

Alycia Wheeldon

Dresser

Bill Stahl

1st Carpenter

Greg Chambers

Props Builder

Camille MacDonald

Lighting Operator

Paul Boddum

Head Scenic

Eva Kuo

Props Builder

Nicole Genge

Audio Operator

Sara Ahmadihrad

Scenic Painter

Janet Pym

Head of Wardrobe

Dom Larraguibel

Deck Operator

Josh Boyd

Scenic Painter

Carly Beamish

Wardrobe Coordinator

Brandon Foffano

Video Operator

Nina Hartt

Scenic Painter

Ilana Harendorf

Lead Hand

n'səl'xcin recordings voiced by Justine Manuel and Nancy Saddleman. Producing support for Kim Senklip Harvey provided by Rachel Penny. Sisters performed by The Halluci Nation ft Northern Voice; Sila performed by The Halluci Nation ft Tanya Tagaq.

Thank You: The world premiere producing teams, Fire Company 1.0, Cris Derksen, Kristen van Ginhoven, Eddie at Zen and Tonic, Nookmis Store on Walpole Island, Maya Wilson, Derrick Chua, Lil ChaCha, Charleana Toney.

Kamloopa was first performed in 2018 at The Cultch's Historic Theatre in Vancouver, British Columbia, on the unceded Territories of the x'məθk'əyəm, Skwx wú7mesh, Stó:lō, and səl ilwataʔ First Nations. It was co-produced by Western Canada Theatre (TK'əmlúps/ Kamloops, British Columbia), Persephone Theatre and Gordon Tootoosis Nikāniwīn Theatre (sāskwatōn / ᓴᑎᓃᓂ / Saskatoon, Saskatchewan), and The Cultch, in collaboration with National Arts Centre / Centre national des Arts Indigenous Theatre (Odawa / Ottawa, Ontario) and partners Pacific Association of First Nations Women and Bill Reid Gallery of Northwest Coast Art (Vancouver, British Columbia).

BACKGROUND NOTES

*How do you discover yourself
when Columbus already did that?*

— Kim Senklip Harvey

Playwright Kim Senklip Harvey says *Kamloopa* came from “wanting to be seen in the complexities of what it means to be an Indigenous woman.” She was an actress when she began writing and this play came out of her own experience. “I was being asked to be a victim all the time, and that’s not me. That’s not my friends. That’s not the powerful women I know in my life. The women in my life laugh and joke and have... agency and sovereignty over everything they do... and that’s what *Kamloopa* is. It’s three women who have sovereignty over what they do.”

The Merriam Webster online dictionary defines the word sovereignty, in part, this way:
b) : freedom from external control :
AUTONOMY

The three sovereign characters of *Kamloopa* seek greater connection, a place to belong, a way to come fully into themselves. Their commitment and tenacity never waver and neither does their humour. Can a comedy be poetic? Yup. Is laughter a component of resilience? You bet. Can a story withstand seismic spiritual shocks and still keep its zing? Most certainly. If it embraces human and animal and spirit characters, is it still a comedy? Yes, yes, and yes.

Kamloopa has been described as a multi-layered, celebratory dance party. Harvey herself calls it a ceremony, a contribution to ‘our cultural evolution.’ She says innovation and courage are necessary to produce it. She brings both in her dialogue, which is by turns poetic and raucous.

It pulses with a wild grab-bag of pop culture references. While it is tempting to quote from the play here, we will resist so that you can discover – and delight in – its swash and buckle for yourself.

Webster also includes a definition for ‘sovereignty’ that has fallen out of use:

3) obsolete : supreme excellence or an example of it

This applies both to Harvey’s achievement and to these three tough-tender matriarchs-in-the-making, who, as the playwright says, “...have complications and challenges, but they love, they laugh, they fight, they cry, and they find joy.”

We hope you do, too.

PS: *Kamloopa* is also the name of the largest powwow in Western Canada, held annually just outside of Kamloops, B.C. One of this year’s events promises attendees will be “resmerized.”

Playwright Biography:

Kim Senklip Harvey is a proud member of the Syilx and Tshilhqot’in Nations with Ancestral ties to the Dakelh, Secwepemc and Ktunaxa communities. She is a Storyteller, Indigenous Theorist and Cultural Evolutionist. Her artistic practice embraces blogging, podcasting, play and script writing, as well as innovating new ways of creation and artistic engagement. In 2021, Harvey began her PhD in Law, focusing on land-based relational methodologies and artistic legal orders. *Kamloopa* was the first Indigenous play to win a Jessie Richardson Award in 2019, and it went on to win the 2020 Governor General’s Award.

Background Notes by Paula Wing.

Running Time:
2 hours, including an intermission.



alaska B based in Toronto, ON. **SOULPEPPER 2022: KAMLOOPA:** *An Indigenous Matriarch Story*. **OTHER THEATRE:** *Tiny Tenement Of Terrors* (Sheridan College); *MEAT* (Musical Stage Co. Commission). **FILM & TELEVISION:** *Through Black Spruce*; *Mary Two-Axe Earley: I Am Indian Again*; *The Boathouse*. **OTHER:** Recipient of the 2019 Canadian Screen Award for Achievement in Music: Original Score.



YOLANDA BONNELL is a 2 Spirit Anishinaabe-Ojibwe, South Asian mixed storyteller and facilitator from Fort William First Nation. **SOULPEPPER 2022: KAMLOOPA:** *An Indigenous Matriarch Story*. **OTHER THEATRE:** *bug* (TPM/NEPA/manidoons collective. Dora nomination); *Two Odysseys: Pimootewin/Gállábártnit* (Signal Theatre/Soundstreams. Dora nomination); *The Unnatural and Accidental Women* (National Arts Centre Indigenous Theatre); *The Breathing Hole* (Stratford Festival). **OTHER:** Co-artistic leader of manidoons collective and in 2020, her play, *bug* was shortlisted for a Governor General Literary Award. Yolanda was also the first Indigenous artist recipient of the Jayu Arts for Human Rights Award and won the PGC Tom Hendry Drama Award for her play, *My Sister's Rage*.



SAMANTHA BROWN is a queer, blended race: Anishinaabe and European settler, storyteller from Onaping, Ontario. She is currently living in T'karonto. **SOULPEPPER 2022: KAMLOOPA:** *An Indigenous Matriarch Story*. **FOR SOULPEPPER:** *August: Osage County* (2019), Soulpepper Academy (2021). **OTHER:** *Oil* (ARC, 2020); *Scavenger's Daughter* (Paradigm Productions, 2019); *Ipperwash* (Native Earth, 2018); *Kamloopa* (WCT, The Cultch, Gordon Tootosis Nīkānīwin Theatre, Persephone, 2018).



ARIA EVANS is an award-winning, queer, Toronto-based interdisciplinary artist working in dance, theatre and film. Aria is a certified Intimacy Coordinator and draws on their experiences of being multiracial to capture meaningful social and cultural themes through their interactive art. Collaboration is the departure point to their work created under their company POLITICAL MOVEMENT. As an active speaker, facilitator and curator, Aria advocates for inclusion and the representation of diversity, and uses their artistic practice to question the ways we can coexist together.



KIM SENKLIP HARVEY hails from the Syilx and Tsilhqot'in Nations and has ancestral ties to the Dakelh, Secwepemc and Ktunaxa Nations. **SOULPEPPER 2022: KAMLOOPA:** *An Indigenous Matriarch Story*. **FILM & TELEVISION:** *Break Horizons: A Concert Documentary*, *Making The Mystics: An Artistic Ceremony Documentary* **OTHER:** Governor General Award winner for Drama, Significant Artistic Achievement in Decolonizing Theatre (Jessie Richardson).



KATHLEEN JONES was born & raised in the sleepy town of Brighton, Ontario. **SOULPEPPER 2022:** *KAMLOOPA: An Indigenous Matriarch Story*. **FOR SOULPEPPER:** *Peter Pan* (2017-19), *Sisters* (2018) **OTHER THEATRE:** *Into The Woods*, *The Judas Kiss*, *Sweeney Todd* (Talk is Free Theatre); *Sunday in the Park With George* (Eclipse Theatre); *The Jungle*, *Old Stock: A Refugee Love Story* (Tarragon Theatre); *The Wager* (Theatre Gargantua); *Winners and Losers* (Chromatic Theatre); *Molly Bloom* (Fourth Gorgon); *Lukumi*, *Esu Crossing the Middle Passage*, *Bleeders* (The Watah Theatre); *Bright Lights*, *Big Plans* (Theatre Brouhaha); *Slip*, *Special Constables* (Scapegoat Collective); *Edward II* (New Theatre Projects).



DANIELA MASELLIS is a set and lighting designer, born and raised in amiskwaciwaskahikan (Edmonton, Alberta). **SOULPEPPER 2022:** *KAMLOOPA: An Indigenous Matriarch Story*. **OTHER THEATRE:** *Breathing Hole* (Stratford Festival); *Sweat* (Citadel/ArtsClub); *Pawakan MacBeth* (Akpik Theatre)



SAMANTHA MCCUE is Anishinaabekwe from the Chippewas of Georgina Island and Ned'u'ten from Lake Babine First Nation. She grew up on the Musqueam Reserve in Vancouver, BC, and currently lives in Ottawa. Samantha graduated from York University's Theatre Production program in 2017. **SOULPEPPER 2022:** *KAMLOOPA: An Indigenous Matriarch Story*, *Where the Blood Mixes*. Selected design credits include: *The Herd* (Citadel Theatre); *Little Red Warrior and His Lawyer* (Belfry Theatre); *I Am William* (Stratford Festival); *Honour Beat* (The Grand); *Aqsarniit* (Confederation Centre of the Arts); *Kamloopa* (Western Canada Theatre); *The Monument* (Factory Theatre); *Thanks For Giving* (Arts Club Theatre Company)



JOELLE PETERS is from Walpole Island First Nation in Southwestern Ontario. **SOULPEPPER 2022:** *KAMLOOPA: An Indigenous Matriarch Story*. **OTHER THEATRE:** *The Election* (Passe Muraille/Common Boots/Nightwood/Theatre Direct); *Two Odysseys: Pimootewin* (Signal/Soundstreams); *Dreary and Izzy* (Theatre Northwest). **FILM & TELEVISION:** *Shoresy*; *In Her City*; *Web of Lies*. **OTHER:** In 2021 she was awarded the Sharon Elkin Plays for Young People Award for her play *Frozen River* (co-written with Michaela Washburn & Carrie Costello). Joelle was named the Siminovitch Prize Protegee (Playwriting) by laureate Tara Beagan in 2020.



potatoCakes_digital is the award winning production design, digital arts, and technical services company of Emily Soussana and Andrew Scriver. Formed as a collective in 2018, and officially incorporated in 2021, they have been unofficially working together for over six years as an all-encompassing artistic and technical team offering digital dramaturgical support, production management, and technical direction – as well as designing video, lighting, sound, set, and costumes for live performance, installation, and digital art in Tiotia:ke and across Canada. The company’s mandate is to technically helm and realise cohesive, digital enhanced, character driven designs for productions from conception to performance. As digital dramaturgs, Emily and Andrew have helped push the boundaries of the Canadian performance digital landscape, through their work with Playwrights’ Workshop Montreal leading digital creation residencies, and the Associated Designers of Canada as co-curators of the Level UP symposium in 2021 and Live Virtual Experiments since fall 2021.



NEHA ROSS was born and raised in Sharjah, United Arab Emirates. **SOULPEPPER 2022: KAMLOOPA: *An Indigenous Matriarch Story*. FOR SOULPEPPER: *Animal Farm, 27 Club* (2018); *88 Keys* (2019); ASM: *Kim’s Convivence* (2013); *Cowboy Versus Samurai* (2016). OTHER THEATRE: *Prince Hamlet, ICELAND* (Why Not Theatre); *We Are Proud to Present...* (Theatre Centre); *Mixtape* (Crow’s Theatre), *Other Side of the Game* (Cahoots Theatre & Obsidian Theatre); *One Thing Leads to Another* (Young Peoples Theatre); *People Power* (Carlos Bulosan). Assistant Stage Manager: *Mahabharata* (Shaw Festival), *R + J* (Stratford). OTHER: Shout out to the the producing and production team for all their hard work and support.**



PAULINE SHIRT was born and raised in Saddle Lake Reserve, Alberta. Pauline is greatly recognized for her commitment to the Toronto Indigenous community and for her dedication as a teacher and lecturer. She is a member of the Three Fires Society and the Buffalo Dance Society. She is a Founder of Kapapamahchakwew - Wandering Spirit School. She serves many Indigenous organizations to enhance the betterment of the Toronto Indigenous community. Today, Pauline serves as a mentor to many Indigenous youth and young families as an experienced and trusted Grandmother.



KAITLYN YOTT (she/they) is a queer, Coast Tsimshian and Japanese-Canadian actor based in so-called Vancouver. She is thrilled to be returning to *Kamloopa* after originating the role of Mikaya in the World Premiere in 2018 and to now be making their stage debut at Soulpepper. Select Theatre credits: *Pawakan Macbeth* (Akpik Theatre); *Little Women* (Chemainus Theatre); *Peter Pan* (CTYP); *Les Filles du Roi* and *Children of God* (Urban Ink). Select Film/Animation credits: *Querencia* (APTN & Bright Shadow Productions); *Charmed* (CW); *Team Zenko Go!* (Dreamworks & Mainframe Studios).



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Lear's daughter in a man's world.

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World Premiere. On Stage Aug 25 – Oct 2.

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On Stage Aug 27 – Oct 1.

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Performing Arts

Native Earth Performing Arts is Canada's premiere Indigenous performing arts company. We are dedicated to sharing stories of the Indigenous experience through theatre, dance, and multidisciplinary arts. For 39 years, Native Earth has led the creation of the Indigenous body of work in Canada and developed the work of over 200 artists through *Weesageechak Begins to Dance*, our annual development festival of new Indigenous works.



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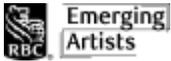
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