

September 28, 2020

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Six Nations/Brantford, ON** - Kaha:wi Dance Theatre is thrilled to announce the world premiere of ***Continuance - Yonkwa'nikonhrakontáhkwen / Our Consciousness Continues Unchanged*** a physically distanced live multimedia performance taking place on October 3, 2020 at 8:15pm at the Woodland Cultural Centre, the site of the Mohawk Institute Residential School. The performance created and produced by Artistic Director Santee Smith is a part of the National Arts Centre's *Grand Acts of Theatre*, an initiative led by English Theatre Artistic Director Jillian Keiley.

<https://nac-cna.ca/en/englishtheatre/packages/grand-acts-of-theatre>

Kaha:wi Dance Theatre is honoured to be one of 11 of Canada's most innovative theatre companies invited to create and perform a large-scale new work in response to these challenging times.

Continuance is the state of remaining in existence and the company's Grand Act of Theatre is just that, an embodiment of resilience and a celebration of Indigenous continuance.

*Continuance - Yonkwa'nikonhrakontáhkwen / Our Consciousness Continues Unchanged* shines light, 3D mapping on the darkness of the Mohawk Institute Residential School architecture while illuminating the fact that the 142 year history of the school did not destroy cultural perpetuity. Disintegrating the façade of the school into images portraying cultural strength, beauty and iconic Haudenosaunee imagery, the performance is a vivid reminder of the powerful ways of being, embedded within Haudenosaunee wisdom.

Six Nations based artist Santee Smith collaborates with a stellar team. Full Production credits:

<https://www.kahawidance.org/continuance>

Smith states, "My vision of the Grand Act of Theatre is to illuminate an antithetic experience from the intended purpose of the architects of Canada's first Residential School. Our Grand Act rebukes the evil intent that the schools were designed to more easily remove Indigenous people from their lands and communicates Indigenous bodies, knowledges and connection to land persist. At times of societal uncertainty Indigenous knowledge offers meaningful ways to live in the world with balanced harmony to which society can look to for guidance. It is my hope to offer community inspiration to regain a sense of balance and harmony in life, to promote pride, connect with spirituality through our symbols and bring awareness to our collective memory. Continuance is opportunity to remove grief and restore the ability to see, hear, speak and ingest beauty and strength, traditional words and concepts."

AVA Animation & Visual Arts animators Emma Lopez and Pedro Navaerz have designed a digital dream world transforming the Mohawk Institute into fantastically epic scenes depicting the Kanonhwaratónhthsera / Thanksgiving Address. <https://www.kahawidance.org/> Audiences will enter into the Mohawk Institute grounds, a site transformed through light, sound and embodied performance. An all Indigenous cast of performers will energize audiences in a choreographic interplay between design and original contemporary Indigenous music.

National Arts Centre's President and CEO Christopher Deacon explains, "Through *Grand Acts of Theatre*, we will invest in new creation by extraordinary Canadian theatre artists, and create wonderful experiences that will allow audiences and communities to engage with the performing arts both live and online." A not to be missed experience, *Continuance* - Yonkwa'nikonhrakontáhkwen / Our Consciousness Continues Unchanged will also be filmed by Six Nations cinematographer Jon Elliott, a video will be released on the National Arts Centre's website for the world to witness.

Kaha:wi Dance Theatre is pleased to partner with long-time collaborator and site host of the Grand Act, the Woodland Cultural Centre. "We are looking forward to collaborating with Santee on the production *Continuance* for Grand Acts of Theatre. This large-scale event fulfills our ongoing vision to create opportunities for increased awareness, healing from the Residential School legacy and uplift the spirits of Survivors of the Mohawk Institute and all who have been affected. *Continuance* has the potential to educate, inspire and celebrate Indigenous resilience in a very positive and impactful way."

Smith expresses, "Our cinematic digital imaginative display of continuance offers inspiration and a reprieve in dealing with today's challenges of the pandemic. That being said, we are working to ensure this experience is safe and physically distanced." Following COVID-19 guidelines, there will be a limited audience capacity. Immediately, after the premiere performance there will be two more opportunities to see the performance. For ticket information go to: For tickets: insert link

Kaha:wi Dance Theatre is grateful for the generous support of company funders: Canada Council for the Arts, Ontario Arts Council and the Toronto Arts Council and from private donors through Canada Helps <https://www.kahawidance.org/donate>

Alongside of the National Arts Centre Foundation, the company acknowledges the RBC Foundation as Presenting Partner of Grand Acts of Theatre. RBC has a long-standing commitment to supporting the development of emerging Canadian artists, most recently demonstrated through their leadership support of the National Arts Centre's #CanadaPerforms livestream series, which provided emergency relief funding to 700 Canadian artists. Grand Acts of Theatre is also made possible thanks to the generous support of The Jenepher Hooper Fund for Theatre at the National Arts Centre Foundation, established as a result of a generous gift from the estate of Jenepher Margaret Hooper.

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For more information:  
[www.kahawidance.org](http://www.kahawidance.org)

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