



A Tale of Reconciliation

Cottagers and Indians, a heart-warming and humorous story inspired by real life events on stage at the BMO Studio Theatre next week.

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SAINT JOHN – Cast and crew are in the final preparation stages for the Atlantic Repertory Production (ARC) of the endearing play *Cottagers and Indians*. The timely tale, written by Canadian playwright Drew Hayden Taylor, was inspired by real events coined the “Wild Rice Wars” by local media in Ontario.

In the play, as in real life, conflict ensues bringing up questions of ownership, equity, tradition, health, colonization, and reconciliation. The conflict over wild ricing on Pigeon Lake drew attention to Indigenous rights and traditional foods. *Cottagers and Indians* is told with warmth and humour, and encompasses issues of community, respect, and ownership.

“Cottagers & Indians’ succeeds in teaching while entertaining - which is a hard balance to strike. There's laughter and anger and stories - but without those teachings, we don't further our discussions or reconciliation - we just perpetuate the argument.” James Dallas Smith, cast.

Cottagers and Indians will be performed at the BMO Studio Theatre, located at 112 Princess Street, with matinee and evening performances available. General admission tickets cost \$35, while students can enjoy the play for only \$20. Tickets can be purchased by visiting tickets.saintjohntheatrecompany.com or calling 506-652-7582.

This production is made possible by generous support from RBC Emerging Artists; Emera; the Pannell Family Foundation; the Sisters of Charity; the TD Ready Commitment; Arts Culture NB; the Government of Canada; the NB Children’s Foundation; Nutrien; the Province of New Brunswick; the Saint John Exhibition Association, and BMO Financial Group.

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Learn more about ARC and its future homebase.

Since its inaugural production in April of 2019, the Atlantic Repertory Company has steadily grown.

What began as a small pilot project with the goal of employing Atlantic Canadian theatre artists in Atlantic Canada has now developed into a fully realized professional company. ARC turns out a minimum of three productions every season while also providing ARC Academy professional development training to artists during the off-season.

As ARC continues to grow, so does its need for a space to operate out of. By 2025, we hope to employ a full-time team of permanent Resident Artists who will work on every ARC production in some capacity. The reality of this plan is that the 112 Princess Street production facility is simply too small to house the SJTC's permanent staff and that proposed for the ARC.

That's where the Sydney Street Courthouse comes in. When the Courthouse Theatre is fully operational, it will become ARC's new homebase. It will provide office space for Resident Artists, more and larger rehearsal/production spaces, and the opportunity for in-person ARC Academy sessions.

The new Courthouse Theatre will become a cultural hub for professional Atlantic Canadian artists, and it is our hope that this state-of-the-art, brand new production facility will encourage Atlantic Canadian talent to stay in Atlantic Canada whilst also enticing national and international artists to make New Brunswick their new base of operations. The professional caliber of ARC's productions increases Saint John's theatrical reputation with every performance, and the addition of the Courthouse Theatre as a homebase will secure ARC's continued ability to make our city shine, both on-stage and off.

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