

Sep 21, 2022

Maskisin / Rinse

grunt gallery and Western Front are pleased to present performances by Nehiyaw Isko artist Cheyenne Rain LeGrande and Narrm/ Melbourne-based artist and choreographer Amrita Hepi.

This is a chance to witness two remarkable practices that diverge across continents and worldviews, and converge in a shared reckoning with the idea of linear time and the singular self. LeGrande and Hepi variously inhabit performance as a means to explore unrecognized spaces that are cracked and teased open through language, adornment, embodiment, and the image refracted.

LeGrande will present a new performance work titled *Maskisin*, in conjunction with her exhibition *Mullyanne Nîmito* on view at grunt gallery through October 29, 2022. Hepi will present an excerpt of *Rinse*, a new work currently in development.

Program

8 p.m.

Maskisin by Cheyenne Rain LeGrande

Videography: Eli Hirtle

Music: Connie LeGrande and Kokum (Nêhiyawêwin translation), Chandra Melting Tallow (production)

Statement from the artist: *Nîmito* in nêhiyawêwin translates to "she dances." This performance includes two objects: a hybrid moccasin platform shoe and a bepsi/beer tab shawl. The video *Mullyanne Nîmito* (2022) explores my Nehiyaw femme identity. Exploring ideas around Nehiyaw alien, protection, movement as healing, ancestral knowledge, traditional practice, and Nehiyaw fashion.

The bepsi tab shawl is a sculptural garment made out of beer/ pop can tabs that myself and my community have been collecting for the past 5 years. I weaved the tabs and pastel ribbon together to create a long shawl with fringe similar to a fancy shawl. With the shawl I wanted to use a daily object and reuse it. My ancestors use to create garments out of everything around them and this was something I come across daily. Both the shawl and the moccasin platforms are an act of reclamation. My aunt taught me how to make traditional moccasins and that shared knowledge I hold close to my heart. Nanaskomitin Auntie Christine. I am thankful to all the aunties, Kokums, and ancestors who have guided me.

Art and fashion have always been a part of my family's identity. For me and many Indigenous folks it is a way of expressing yourself. It is a way of storytelling. Mullyanne is a name I carry with honour. Nimâmâ growing up on the rez in Wabasca would always stand out for how she would dress. Mixing together patterns and colors in ways no one else had. She was always referred to as Mullyanne. The story of Mullyanne that has been told to me is that she was a Nehiyaw elder in the community who would Natohksisot (dress in all kinds of ways). The name Mullyanne was given to her by her community and again was given to Nimama for how she would dress. When I came into the world I became little Mullyanne. I have always looked up to Nimama so to receive this name felt very special. When I would visit my Kokums and aunties in Wabasca in the summers and would be called Mullyanne, I always felt held with love. It is an honour. I carry that name, story, and spirit with me when performing. I hope the audience can also feel held with love from all the aunties and Kokums.

I am grateful to Eli Hirtle for filming *Mullyanne Nîmito*. It was so special to collaborate together on our lands. Nanaskomitin to Chandra Melting Tallow for helping make my dreams come true and producing an iconic track. Thank you to Nimama Connie LeGrande and my Kokum who helped me translate Fleetwood Mac's *Dreams* into nêhiyawêwin and Nimama for guiding me through learning how to sing in nêhiyawêwin. Nanaskmotin to my partner Shaun Hansen for being the woodworker of my dreams and helping me with the platform moccasins. Y'all made my dreams into reality.

Cheyenne Rain LeGrande is a Nehiyaw Isko artist, from Bigstone Cree Nation. She currently resides in Amiskwaciy Waskahikan also known as Edmonton, Alberta. Cheyenne graduated from Emily Carr University with her BFA in Visual Arts in 2019. Her work often explores history, knowledge, and traditional practices. Through the use of her body and language, she speaks to the past, present, and future. Cheyenne's work is rooted in the strength to feel, express, and heal. Bringing her ancestors with her, she moves through installation, photography, video, sound, and performance art.

- Intermission -

8:45 p.m.

Rinse by Amrita Hepi
Directed by Mish Grigor
Costuming by Aleisa Jelbart
Sound by Daniel Jenatsch
Contains haze, loud sound, and some coarse language.

*of course
whitefellas try to acknowledge things
but they do it wrong
they say*

before we begin I'd like to pay my respects

*not understanding
that there isn't a time before it begins
it has all already begun*

- Running Dog

What is it about the beginning that remains intoxicating? Our persistent lust for the first rush of a romance, scene, canon, theory, relationship, meal, or country. Created by Bundjalung and Ngapuhi choreographer and dancer Amrita Hepi, *Rinse* explores the romance of beginnings and what happens next, when those initial thrills begin to fade and inertia takes over.

Hepi's electric new performance questions whether being on the brink of extinction—a series of endings of various kinds—has intensified the seduction of the past. By recreating an entropic origin myth on stage, *Rinse* travels from end to ending, weaving together autobiographical elements with the grand narratives of art, feminism, dance, the void, desire, popular culture, and colonial history. An intimate yet epic solo performance based on a dynamic improvisational score, *Rinse* expands Hepi's fascination with hybridity under empire and contemporary dance's fixation with the "neutral" body.

Amrita Hepi (Bundjulung/Ngapuhi) is an award winning artist. Her current practice is concerned with dance as social function performed within galleries, performance spaces, video art, and digital technologies. She engages in forms of historical fiction and hybridity—especially those that arise under empire—to investigate the relationship of bodies to personal histories and archives. Amrita is represented by Anna Schwartz Gallery.

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