

MEDIA RELEASE

Level 5, 10 Hickson Road The Rocks
Sydney NSW 2000 Australia
Phone 61 2 8248 6500 Fax 61 2 8248 6599
sydneyfestival.org.au



Huff

AUSTRALIAN PREMIERE

Native Earth Performing Arts, Canada



Photo: Akipari

"Huff is vital theatre. It's messy and wrenching, daring the audience to go to almost unbearable places. It begs us to see what we'd rather turn away from, making us laugh one moment and sucker punching us in the gut the next.... Please see Huff. Bring a trusted friend, an open heart, and Kleenex"
Prism International

"an important work that demands to be seen"

★★★★

The Torontoist

Sydney Festival presents the Australian premiere of the critically acclaimed one-man show, *Huff* from **Native Earth Performing Arts**, Canada's oldest professional Indigenous theatre company. As *Huff* opens, a boy named Wind is trying to end his life. It is, he thinks, his only escape from a vicious cycle of abuse, neglect, violence and solvent-sniffing.

Huff is the wrenching, yet darkly comic tale of Indigenous brothers caught in a torrent of solvent abuse and struggling to cope with the death of their mother. Wind's fantastic dream world bleeds into his haunting reality, as he's preyed on by the Trickster through the hallways at school, the abandoned motel he loves more than home, and his own fragile psyche.

Award-winning Indigenous performer and playwright **Cliff Cardinal** deftly portrays over a dozen characters in his unflinching, dream-like portrayal combining mythic storytelling with the harsh realities of life on a First Nations reserve in Northern Ontario. Sobering, but with a heavy dose of black humor, *Huff* takes a hard look where so many have turned a blind eye.

Touted as one of the most exciting new voices in Canadian theatre, Cardinal made his theatrical debut with Native Earth in *Freeman's Wake* by **Yvette Nolan** in 2005. His work as a performer has been recognized across Canada, including a Jessie Richardson Memorial Theatre Award nomination for Outstanding Performance for *Tales of an Urban Indian* by **Darrell Dennis** with **Green Thumb Theatre**.

As a playwright, Cardinal's first play *Stitch* premiered to great acclaim, winning both the Spotlight Award for Performance and Theatre Passe Muraille's Emerging Artist Award for Notable Artistic Impression at Toronto's SummerWorks Festival. For *Huff*, he was awarded the 2012 Buddies in Bad Times Vanguard Award for Risk & Innovation and the 2015 RBC Tarragon Emerging Playwright Prize. Cliff won the 2016 Dora Mavor Moore Awards for Outstanding New Play and Outstanding Performance for this production of *Huff*.

Native Earth Performing Arts, currently in its 34th year, is dedicated to creating, developing and producing professional artistic expressions of the Indigenous experience in Canada.

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Writer/Performer Cliff Cardinal
Director Karin Randoja
Set / Costume Design Jackie Chau
Lighting Design Michelle Ramsay
Sound Design Alex Williams

Where Reginald Theatre
Seymour Centre

When 24–28 January
Tue, Wed & Thu at 8pm
Fri at 6pm
Sat at 4pm & 8pm

Duration 70mins, no interval

Tickets General Admission \$36 + booking fee

Bookings Sydney Festival on 1300 856 876
sydneyfestival.org.au/huff

Age suitability 16 years +

Multipacks are available for Sydney Festival events. Book 3 or more events and save 10 – 15%. Discounts apply to full price A Reserve or General Admission tickets.



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