



PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release

Waskapitan

A Call to Action for Reconciliation

Joliette, November 23, 2020 – The tragic death of Joyce Echaquan last September in Joliette shook all of Quebec. Many artists will be joining their voices in her honour to raise public awareness about the importance of dialogue between Peoples and of the fight against racism with the benefit-concert Waskapitan [Wasgabidan], which means “let’s come closer together” in Atikamekw. An initiative from the Lanaudière Native Friendship Centre and the Desjardins Cultural Centre, the event is supported by the Regroupement des centres d’amitié autochtones du Québec (RCAAQ) and several Joliette organizations, including the Festival international de Lanaudière and the Musée d’art de Joliette.

Many Indigenous artists and other Quebec performers will be sharing the stage in for this unifying and motivating show. The bill includes Elisapie, Florent Vollant, Anachnid, Wass, Natasha Kanapé Fontaine, Jemmy Echaquan, Shait, Jeremy Dutcher, Dominique Fils-Aimé, Ariane Moffatt, Patrick Watson, Boucar Diouf and other artists.

Free online viewing

Providing great visibility to Indigenous cultures under the artistic direction of Elisapie and Maurin Auxéméry (FIJM), the 90-minute show can be viewed online free of charge from December 3, 2020, to January 3, 2021. Fostering dialogue and encounters between Peoples, the performances by Indigenous and non-Indigenous artists will be a truly beautiful demonstration of our cultural and artistic wealth.

Bringing Peoples closer together

Spectators will be invited to make an online donation before, during and after the concert at the waskapitan.org website. The funds raised during the benefit-concert will be donated to the Waskapitan Fund. More specifically, this Fund will contribute to a significant public artwork in honour of Joyce Echaquan that will positively contribute to Indigenous presence and visibility in Joliette. Waskapitan Fund will also finance innovative projects, such as the establishment of a clinic within the new infrastructures of the Lanaudière Native Friendship, slated to open in 2022, and projects by and for urban Indigenous people to improve Indigenous living conditions and promote closer ties between Peoples in Quebec.



Source – Regroupement des centres d’amitié autochtones du Québec
85 Bastien, Suite 100, Wendake, QC G0A 4V0
rcaa.q.info



Quotes:

“As an unprecedented meeting of Indigenous and non-Indigenous people, Waskapitan is a unique opportunity for sharing. It starts a dialogue and is an opportunity to do something beautiful together.”

–Elisapie, Waskapitan artistic director and performer

“We invite everyone who has been touched by Joyce Echaquan’s story to become agents of change and to support the Waskapitan benefit-concert. Beyond outrage, let’s take action—together—to make our society more just, more respectful and more inclusive.

–Jennifer Brazeau, Executive Director, CAAL

About the Regroupement des centres d’amitié autochtones du Québec

The Regroupement des Centres d'amitié autochtones du Québec (RCAAQ) groups 10 Native Friendship Centres in Chibougamau, Joliette, La Tuque, Montréal, Senneterre, Maniwaki, Sept-Îles, Trois-Rivières, Val-d'Or and Québec. For 50 years, the Quebec Native Friendship Centre Movement has advocated for the rights and interests of Indigenous citizens in Quebec cities through their continuum of frontline services. The mission of the Friendship Centres is to improve the quality of life of urban Indigenous people, promote culture and build bridges between Peoples.

For more information

Mélissa Bradette, TACT
418-540-0324
mbradette@tactconseil.ca



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