

**MANIDOONS COLLECTIVE AND BUDDIES PREMIERE AN IRREVERENT
RECLAMATION STORY, YOLANDA BONNELL'S *WHITE GIRLS IN MOCCASINS*
MARCH 8 – 20**

A manidoons collective + Buddies in Bad Times Theatre co-production

WHITE GIRLS IN MOCCASINS

by Yolanda Bonnell

Tickets and info: <https://buddiesinbadtimes.com/show/white-girls-in-moccasins/>

Gi-bgizoomgad epiichi biinjii'yii debwewin-nim

— you swim in your truth —

manidoons collective and Buddies partner for the world premiere of a new play by 2-Spirit playwright, performer, and educator Yolanda Bonnell. *White Girls in Moccasins* follows an Indigenous girl, Miskozi, as she tries to find her way back to her cultural roots. She's accompanied by an ancestral river, Ziibi, and her inner white girl, Waabishkizi, on her journey, grappling with how to live as a whole person in a world steeped in white supremacy. With irreverent humour, the show world-hops between memory, dreams, and a surreal gameshow, blending music, immersive projections, and movement.

"Returning to public performance with *White Girls in Moccasins*, after our theatre has been closed to the public for two years, is such a gift." says Interim Director of Operations and Programming, Daniel Carter. "After its time in our Residency Program, I'm thrilled to welcome our communities back to Buddies with this urgent piece of theatre."

Originally created by Yolanda Bonnell (*bug*) at Native Earth's Animikiig Creators Unit, *White Girls in Moccasins* was presented at the Rhubarb Festival in 2018 before being further developed at the Banff Playwrights Lab and through the Buddies Residency Program. For its first mainstage production, Bonnell's script is brought to life by co-directors **Cole Alvis** (*Lilies; Or, The Revival of a Romantic Drama; bug*) and **Samantha Brown** (directorial debut). Joining Yolanda's Miskozi are performance artist and theatre creator **Elizabeth Staples** (*Private Eyes*) as Waabishkizi and artist/activist **Ravyn Wngz** (*Antarctica; 21 Black Futures' Jah in the Ever Expanding Song*) as Ziibi.

The creative team is rounded with set and projection designer **Trevor Schwellnus** (*The Solitudes; Blood Weddings*), animation artist **Rihkee Strapp**, sound designer **Maddie Bautista** (*Oil; Our Fathers, Sons, Lovers, and Little Brothers*), costume designer **Rachel Forbes** (*21 Black Futures; Black Boys*), and lighting designer **Echo Zhou** (*Cake; Made in Macau*).

"manidoons collective has grown since Yolanda and I first set out to tour her solo show *bug*, and how we work is as integral as the plays we make," says co-director Cole Alvis. "With this coproduction the circle of artists we're gathering is growing and we can't wait for audiences to join us in space together again."

Emboldened by pandemic closures to reimagine models and practices of theatre creation, manidoons—a collective focused on Indigenous performance—comes into this co-production with a focus on values-driven relationship building. Creation and production processes have been shaped around the idea of Indigenizing performance practices, with a focus on working culture, schedules, and agreements, and will shape the way both companies produce work going forward.

MEDIA INFO

INTERVIEWS – Listed artists are available for interviews in English. Contact aidan@buddiesinbadtimes.com to arrange.

Yolanda Bonnell (she/they; Anishinaabe-Ojibwe & South Asian, european mixed)

Cole Alvis (she/her; Michif, Chippewa, Irish & English ancestors)

Samantha Brown (she/her; blended race Anishinaabe and European settler)

Ravyn Wngz (she/her; Tanzanian Mohawk Bermudian born)

Elizabeth Staples (she/her; Italian and settler immigrants)

REVIEWS – manidoons and Buddies respectfully request that media hire IBPOC reviewers to engage with *White Girls in Moccasins*, in order to foster a deeper discussion, and to decentre eurocentric criticism. We welcome the reflections and worldviews of marginalized voices, and in particular Indigenous women, Two-Spirit, trans and non-binary critics. For more context and writing on this request, visit [manidoons collective's media request](#). Everyone is welcome and invited to see the show.

Opening night is Thursday, March 10. Contact Aidan Morishita-Miki at aidan@buddiesinbadtimes.com for media accreditation.

ON-LINE RESOURCE – The Buddies website includes a Media Centre that houses press releases, images and other pertinent information for easy download. www.buddiesinbadtimes.com/media

COVID SAFETY

All audience members will be asked to show proof of vaccination, wear a mask while in the building, and fill out a COVID screening form. More information on the theatre's COVID policies and practices can be found here: <https://buddiesinbadtimes.com/covid-safety/>.

For *White Girls in Moccasins*, we have a reduced house capacity of 65 people (out of a 120 venue capacity). All audience members will be at least six feet away from performers, who will be unmasked.

ACCESSIBILITY INFORMATION

Relaxed performance: All performances of *White Girls in Moccasins* will be relaxed performances. The setup of the space and welcoming protocols are designed to welcome audience members who will benefit from a more relaxed performance environment where they are welcome to come and go if need be. A visual story introducing audiences to the space and the show will be available to patrons closer to the show's run.

ASL-interpretation: Pre-recorded ASL-interpretation will be available at all in-person performances, as well as in the digital broadcast. Interpretation will be performed by Deaf Interpreters Amy Ireland and Courage Bacchus.

Digital Broadcast: For those unable to come to the theatre to see *White Girls in Moccasins* in person, we will be offering a digital broadcast option later in the show's run. More details to be announced soon.

Pay-what-you-can and free tickets: Tickets for the show can be purchased at \$10, \$20, or \$40. A number of free tickets for each performance of *White Girls in Moccasins* are available for Indigenous and Afro-Indigenous audiences. These can be selected and booked in advance through our ticketing site.

PLEASE ADD TO YOUR LISTINGS / ANNOUNCEMENTS

A **manidoons collective** + **Buddies in Bad Times Theatre** production
WHITE GIRLS IN MOCCASINS

Miskozi goes on a search for herself and her culture, accompanied by her inner white girl, Waabishkizi, and guided by Ziibi, a manifestation of an ancestral river. An irreverent reclamation story, *White Girls in Moccasins* world-hops between dreams, memories, and a surreal game show as Miskozi grapples with living her truth in a society steeped in white supremacy.

by **Yolanda Bonnell**

directed by **Cole Alvis + Samantha Brown**

starring **Yolanda Bonnell, Elizabeth Staples + Ravyn Wngz**

set + projection design **Trevor Schwellnus**

animation and associate video design **Rihkee Strapp**

costume design **Rachel Forbes**

associate costume design, set and props coordinator **Asli Ozuak**

lighting design **Echo Zhou**

associate lighting design **Sruthi Suresan**

sound design **Maddie Bautista**

stage manager **Dylan Tate-Howarth**

knowledge keeper **Pauline Shirt**

Deaf interpreters **Amy Ireland + Natasha Bacchus**

In-person shows

Previews: March 8 + 9

Opening Night: March 10

Closing Performance: March 20

Runs: Wed-Sat 8pm, Sun 2:30pm

Tickets: PWYC (\$10 / \$20 / \$40), with a number of free tickets for each performance of available for Indigenous and Afro-Indigenous audiences

Digital broadcast

More details coming soon.

Box Office buddiesinbadtimes.com

Buddies in Bad Times Theatre, 12 Alexander Street, Toronto ON

<https://buddiesinbadtimes.com/show/white-girls-in-moccasins/>

manidoons collective is a circle of artists creating Indigenous performance. The artistic leadership includes Yolanda Bonnell (Anishinaabe-Ojibwe & South Asian, european mixed) and Cole Alvis (Michif, Chippewa, Irish & English ancestors) both based in Tkarón:to. manidoons collective recognizes the importance of collaborating with Indigenous communities, specifically Indigenous women, 2-Spirit, trans and non-binary storytellers. manidoons.com

Established in 1979, Buddies in Bad Times Theatre is Toronto's leading destination for artistically rigorous, alternative theatre and a world leader in developing queer voices and stories for the stage. Over the course of its history, it has evolved into the largest facility-based queer theatre company in the world and has made an unparalleled contribution to the recognition and acceptance of queer lives in Canada. buddiesinbadtimes.com