

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

IndieFest returns with bold performances to reimagine the future of storytelling

IndieFest, a fiercely modern celebration of the performing arts and emerging technology, returns for its 3rd year on Nov. 16 - 27, 2022



Opera meets emerging technology with the first ever in-person performance of *Live from the Underworld II: Eurydice's Calling*, which kicks off the festival on Nov. 16 at The Annex (823 Seymour St). Photo credit: Jess MacAleese

VANCOUVER—The third annual IndieFest returns to showcase new and genre-defying musical performances to highlight the stories and people that have been overshadowed by history and tradition. From modern opera, new music, and Indigenous performances to drag, theatre and extended reality, the festival empowers marginalized artists to change the narrative and reimagine the future of storytelling. The festival takes place at several local venues on Nov. 16 - 27, 2022. Tickets and information are available at indiefest.eventbrite.ca.

2022 marks the first year of a fully in-person festival, with 14 events taking place over 11 days. This year's programming invites audiences and artists to consider the last two years, and how a sustainable, equitable future depends on collective healing. These creative works are presented at all stages of the creative process, from initial workshop performances to final, fully realized productions. Full program available at reopera.ca/indiefest

IndieFest co-producers and curators Debi Wong and Stephanie Wong have embarked on a nation-wide collaboration with four indie opera companies to present the Canadian premiere of Pulitzer Prize winning opera, *Angel's Bone*, by Chinese-American Composer Du Yun and Canadian Librettist Royce Vavrek. This newly-imagined, all-Canadian production depicts the realities of child and youth trafficking and sexual exploitation, juxtaposed with the resilience of survivors and the journey of reclaiming one's power.

“The history of opera is steeped in colonial constructs that have excluded many histories, particularly those of BIPOC and LGBTQ2S+ communities. By providing marginalized artists access to innovative spaces and emerging technology, we are empowering them to transcend old power structures that have held back their creative voices,” said Debi Wong.

Opera meets emerging technology with the first ever in-person performance of *Live from the Underworld II: Eurydice’s Calling*, which kicks off the festival on Nov. 16 at The Annex. Using computer-generated sets and mythological avatars brought to life by the remarkable collaboration of opera, dance, hip hop and video game professionals, audiences can experience a hybrid stage adaptation of the story through real-time motion capture and projection. This two-part series has been nominated at the 2022 AUREA Awards, one of the most prestigious events in immersive entertainment, happening this December in Germany at the NTR – The Metaverse Summit.

“We use emerging technology as a blank canvas to drive new ways of problem solving and engaging with the world,” said Stephanie Wong. “We create immersive and interdisciplinary artistic experiences because colonialism, patriarchy, and other social issues we are aiming to deconstruct are complex and require a multitude of ideas and perspectives.”

Audiences can also look forward to the four-part Imaginarium Concert series, which brings together BIPOC and LGBTQ2S+ leaders from different artistic disciplines, at various stages of their careers, to curate and participate in futuristic design processes that catalyzes the arts industry towards transformational change. Curators Stephanie Wong, Kelsey Wavey, Raven Grenier, and Rich Coburn each host an evening of multi-disciplinary experimentation, burlesque, Indigenous performances, and vocal chamber music, respectively.

“IndieFest uplifts the long and rich history of underrepresented communities by amplifying artists and their works at every stage of their artistic journey. Through artistic process and experiences, we can orient everyone towards interconnected and intercultural futures. We invite audiences and artists to dream together, create together and imagine new futures together,” said Debi Wong.

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Media Inquiries

Kei Baritugo (BoldLove Communications) | +1.604.719.7423 | kei@boldlove.ca

IndieFest is funded and supported by:

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About IndieFest and re:Naissance Opera | reopera.ca

Founded in 2017 by Debi Wong, re:Naissance Opera produces modern-day operatic performances that represent and connect the diverse communities, people, storytelling media and voices unique to its home-city of Vancouver, BC. IndieFest is the realization of re:Naissance Opera’s commitment to investing in its local artistic community. In its three-year lifespan, IndieFest has held artistic conversations about anti-Asian racism, workshops for the empowerment of BIPOC and LGBTQ2S+ arts leaders, and Canada’s very first opera hackathon. re:Naissance Opera operates on the stolen ancestral and traditional lands of the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh Úxwumixw (Squamish), and səłilw̓ ətaʔt̓ (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations.

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