

Winner of the 2023 Diverse Voices Playwriting Initiative

Sponsored by the
Illinois State Theatre Outreach Program (ISTOP)

PINK MAN

OR,

THE ONLY INDIAN IN THE ROOM

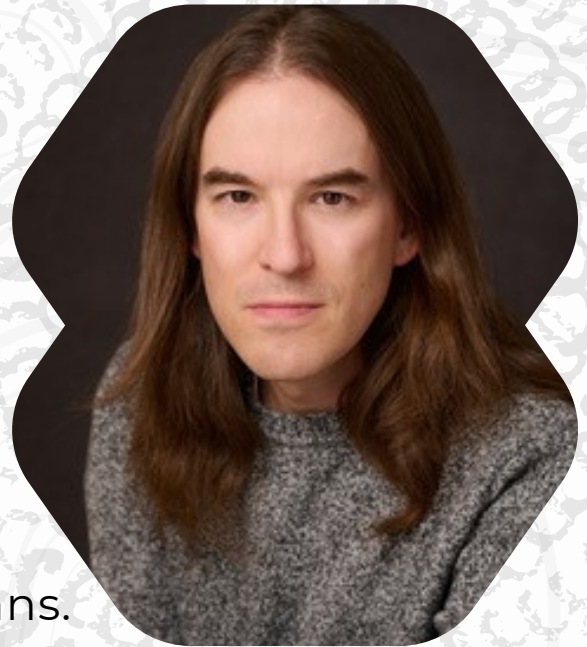
by
Marty Strenczewilk



Friday, April 14, 2023 7:30 p.m.

Illinois State University, Milner Library, Room 122

WINNING PLAYWRIGHT



Marty Strenczewilk

is an Ojibwe theatre artist and storyteller, enrolled with the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians.

Select credits include: co-founding a New York City-based theatre company that created sustainable productions of new plays; touring Europe with Trisha Brown Dance as master carpenter; writing/performing slam poetry across New York City; choreographing a 9/11 anniversary show; performing in *Tony & Tina's Wedding* off-Broadway; and performing in the first staged production of Kurt Vonnegut's *Cat's Cradle* in New York City.

He has a B.A. in Theatre from SUNY Buffalo and has studied at The Barrow Group, Broadway Dance Center, Alvin Ailey, HB Studio, and Joffrey Ballet. He is currently a member of the BETC Writers Group and a member of Creative Nations, an all-Indigenous led artists' collective. His plays can be found on [New Play Exchange](#).

CAST

Tribal affiliations
are noted in parentheses.

INDIAN



Cole Noah Anderson
(Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe)

NANABOZHO



Nate Muckintubbee
(Natchez/Choctaw)

STAGE DIRECTIONS



Satomi Radostits

CHORUS



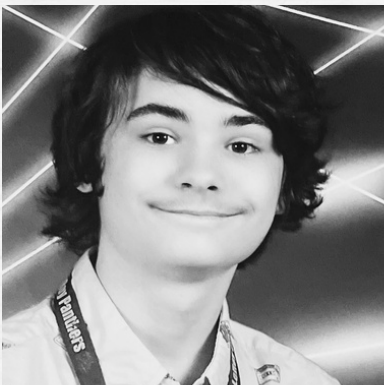
Janet Ademilua



Gillian Larson



Heather Mae Marshall
(Tsimshian, Raven Clan)



Korbin Marshall
(Tsimshian, Raven Clan)



Ryan Murphy



Raelyn O'Brien
(Tsimshian, Raven Clan)

CREATIVE TEAM

DIRECTOR	Shannon Epplett
PROJECTION DESIGN	Shannon Epplett
DRAMATURG	Kee-Yoon Nahm
POSTER DESIGN	Sanhawich Meateanuwat and Satomi Radostits
PROGRAM DESIGN	Molly Briggs-Yonke



MAKE A GIFT

Support this and future events with a gift to the
Crossroads Project Program Fund

DIRECTOR'S NOTES

My Great-great-grandmother, Theresa Cadreau McCoy, born in 1843 in Sault Ste. Marie, was the last of my ancestors to have kept "the old ways." She lived with my grandfather's family when he was a boy: she tanned deer hides in the backyard and made moccasins, and was apparently an embarrassment to her grandchildren. My family has roots in the Soo dating back to at least the 1780s; it is a small town and being "too Indian" at that time (my grandfather was born in 1908, Theresa died in 1923) could mean having your kids taken away to a boarding school. So we stopped being Indian. Growing up, I was told "Grandpa is part-Indian," as if that particular trait didn't pass to the rest of us.

Except I am Indian. In 1974, the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians received federal recognition. My grandfather and his siblings enrolled in the early 1980s, mostly for health care and fishing rights. My mom and uncle joined a few years later, and in the early 1990s, my cousins and I got our "Indian cards" just in time for college and whatever educational benefits might follow (not much, actually).

In my education and career, I've realized how rare Native people are. I am usually the only Indian in the room. I was getting my PhD before I ever met a Native faculty member, and I can count the Native people in theatre studies that I know on one hand. While there are differences between being erased and being invisible, I can attest that they feel the same. I can go back seven generations on my family tree – and I owe it to Niiganihijigak, her daughter Isabelle, her daughter Theresa, her daughter Matilda, her son Dick and so on...to be "Indian Out Loud," to represent all of the Native people who aren't in the room due to racism, genocide, and erasure. If we believe we are not Indian enough, we erase ourselves and are doing the work for the colonizers. As Indian learns in the play, there is no right way to be Native. "You can just be you – pink and all."

- **Shannon Epplett, Ph.D.**
(Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians)

THE DIRECTOR

Shannon Epplert has been an Instructional Assistant Professor in the School of Theatre and Dance at Illinois State University since 2015, where he teaches theatre history, script analysis, devised theatre, and Native American popular culture. He is the faculty co-advisor for TRIBE@ISU, a member of the Indigenous Advocacy and Student Support Team (IASST), and a member of the President's Diversity and Inclusion Advisory Committee, where he heads the subcommittee on land acknowledgement. He received his Ph.D. from University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, and his MA at Illinois State University. Shannon's research focuses on the history of Chicago's Off-Loop theatre community, through a sociological lens.

His work is included in the recently published book Makeshift Chicago Stages: A Century of Theatre and Performance. He has presented papers and served on panels for MATC, ATHE, and SETC; and published articles in *New England Theatre Journal* and *Theatre History Studies*. He is an enrolled member of the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians and is currently developing a performance piece based on the life of Anishinaabe poet Jane Johnston Schoolcraft.

Read an interview
with Kee-Yoon Nahm,
Shannon Epplert, and
Marty Strenczewilk

DIVERSE VOICES PLAYWRITING INITIATIVE

The Diverse Voices Playwriting Initiative welcomes submissions for full-length, unproduced plays by playwrights of color in accordance with the mission statement of the Crossroads Project. A diverse panel of judges comprising of faculty, staff, and students selects one playwright as the winner of the contest.

Thank you to our 2022-2023 readers

**Amanda Bachinger
Chloe Baisa*
Molly Briggs-Yonke*
Bruce Burningham*
Brenden Delcorio
Jessie Denning
Shannon Epplert*
Molly Fritz
Gillian Genardo
Michael Graves
Rosie Hauck**

**Ann Haugo*
Jon Lee
Maggie Marlin-Hess*
Kee-Yoon Nahm*
Jaden O'Berry
Jenefas Okonma*
Al Oltmanns*
Ellie Paulsen*
Kim Pereira
David Prete
Satomi Radostits**

**Tony Reimer
Isabel Samuel
Madeline Sievers
John Stark
Sam Swope*
Camlynn Taylor
Ian Unsbee
Janet Wilson*
Viktor Lukaniuk
Lucy Yahr**

*Member of the Crossroads Project Committee

THE CROSSROADS PROJECT

The Crossroads Project was founded in 2000 by faculty member Dr. Leslie Sloan Orr to promote diversity and inclusion in the theatre at Illinois State University and the surrounding communities.

CHAIR'S MESSAGE

This has been a year of exciting developments for the Diverse Voices Playwriting Initiative. We had more students participate in the play reading and selection process than ever before, demonstrating student interest in both new play development and EDI advocacy in the arts. I am also excited to finally work together with the inspiring students of ISTOP, whose mission overlaps so much with the Crossroads Project.

While our program's primary goal is to support BIPOC theatre artists, it is also an occasion for all participants—students, faculty, and community members alike—to grow. In that sense, it's fitting that our winning play this year is a (belated) coming-of-age story, beginning with the protagonist's memories from childhood and college life, and ending with an Anishinaabe naming ceremony through which Indian finds both himself and his community.

Lastly, I would like to dedicate the culmination of this year's program to the memory of **Ellie Paulsen**, whose insightful observations and perspectives had a great impact on all of us in Crossroads.

- Kee-Yoon Nahm

Visit the [Website](#)

Follow us on [Facebook](#)

Email Kee-Yoon at knahm@IllinoisState.edu

Read this recent Redbird Scholar article:

[Crossroads Project: Bringing diverse voices center stage](#)

ILLINOIS STATE THEATRE OUTREACH PROGRAM

Since the Illinois State Theatre Outreach Program was first established in 2011, ISTOP has helped to educate local and regional audiences by producing cause-themed performances aimed at raising awareness of politically charged issues.

Over the course of our program's efforts, ISTOP has helped to educate about and make donations to the following organizations - Seedling Theatre Company, St. Baldrick's Foundation, the Children's Heart Association, the National Eating Disorders Association, Flashes of Hope, the Special Olympics, and more! They also sponsor and partner with other ISU student organizations, such as Theatre of Ted, Playback, SWAT, ISU Dance Association, Drag Royalty, and more.

Find them on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#).

SPECIAL THANKS

The Multicultural Center, Normal Public Library, ISTOP board, Lucy Yahr, Simone Downie, Julie Lynd and LAN, Connie de Veer, Rosie Hauck, Jeff Grabb, Ray Hatch, Stephanie Kohl Ringle, Connie Blick, Arlene Hutton and Butterfly Effect Theatre Company, Michael Vetere and Saturday Creative Drama, Tanya Picard, Cunv (Chief) Hutke Fields of the Natchez Nation, Nate's Alikchi (Medicine Man) Miko Kaccv, and the Myaami, Peoria, and Kickapoo Nations for allowing us to meet and perform on their traditional homelands.

