



A Note from the Artistic Director

Dear friends,

I often go back to be with family in South Dakota over the 4th of July weekend. Just outside of my hometown of Sisseton, there is an annual Wacipi (the Dakota word for powwow can be literally translated as “they all dance”). This event is one of the oldest continual gatherings of its kind in the nation. It’s a welcoming, vibrant event celebrated and hosted on the

land of the Sisseton Wahpeton Oyate. It brings together generations. We go with our families, we run into friends. It’s filled with dancing, multiple drum groups and the big-hearted humor of MC’s keeping it all moving. There’s also a lot of food and kids playing through those long summer evenings. We’re outdoors, and the light moves across the wide prairie horizon.

It’s not lost on me that this is a tradition that I take my kids to on the 4th of July, a holiday that literally plants a flag for American independence. The event begins by honoring those who have served and currently serve our country in military service. This is not an alternate version of America or its story, it is the roots and history of this country. We are on Native land.

For those of you whose story is reflected onstage today: welcome. And for those of you newer to these stories: welcome – and an invitation to listen. The story of this country is filled with deep wounds, and humor is a way to resilience. It’s ok to laugh. It’s ok to feel, and to feel uncomfortable. Art is a way of being alive together – encountering the difficult things. Comedy is a way to be alive together too – and finding ways to laugh in the face of pain is one of the great superpowers humans have.

I am so grateful to the company of *Between Two Knees* and the 1491s for bringing us this work. It’s part of a constellation of Native work this season – including Indigenous Enterprise Dance and a new digital performance by Joy Harjo.

Let’s keep learning and laughing together.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Sarah". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, sweeping initial "S".

Warmly,
Sarah