



MAKING TREATY 7

Cultural Society

About Treaty 7

Treaty 7 is one of a family of numbered treaties signed between the Government of Canada and the Plains First Nations. But *innaihtsiiyi* (Treaty) didn't begin on September 22, 1877, when the Crown met with the Siksika, Kainai, Piikani, Stoney Nakoda, and Tsuut'ina Peoples at what is now Blackfoot Crossing to sign Treaty 7. Blackfoot Peoples have been making *innaihtsiiyi* with the land and animals for thousands of years, coexisting in peace with Turtle Island. When the five First Nations signed Treaty 7, they walked into it just as they walked with the bison and the water, not anticipating the unimaginable trauma it would bring.

Nearly 150 years later, **Making Treaty 7 Cultural Society** tells the story of that historic agreement, and investigates the results and implications, through music and dance, storytelling, and performance. Our projects are made to inspire audiences and create space for dialogue on issues facing Indigenous communities, and the culture and identity of historic and present Indigenous Peoples.

An Indigenous cultural resurgence

Mokhinistis, the area now known as Calgary, has been a sacred gathering place since time immemorial; a place of confluence where knowledge and ideas come together as naturally as the Elbow and the Bow rivers. As treaty people, we all have a connection and a responsibility to the Indigenous communities of this land.

At **Making Treaty 7 Cultural Society**, we honour and hold space for Treaty 7 Elders, artists, and storytellers to share the oral traditions of Indigenous Peoples in Canada—the struggles, triumphs, strengths, and resilience. The works we create do more than preserve and promote Indigenous artistic practices; they provide a record of our collective joy and healing.

For generations, Indigenous families have gathered in kitchens to laugh, tell stories, and learn from one another—though it hasn't always been made easy. By inviting Indigenous and non-Indigenous audiences alike to witness true stories of Treaty 7, we're giving all peoples a chance to better understand the Treaty 7 Nations, the Truth, and their role in reconciliation. More importantly, we're helping diverse cultures reclaim artistic practices that were once banished, and create a renewed sense of identity and belonging.

Indigenous led, settler supported arts and culture

Making Treaty 7 Cultural Society is the only Indigenous-led production company that supports the training, creation, exhibition, and presentation of Indigenous arts in Treaty 7.

We offer culturally-relevant and responsible programming that includes live performances, presentations, exhibitions, educational activities, and cultural events designed to amplify voices that have been historically silenced. By creating meaningful opportunities to share, celebrate, and engage in authentically Indigenous arts and culture, we're creating stronger, more connected communities and a better future for all peoples.



Our Founders

We acknowledge the late Elk Shadow / Pona Ko'Taksi, also known as Michael Green, and Middle Bull / Tatsikiistamik, also known as Narcisse Blood.

Elk Shadow was the founder and visionary behind the Making Treaty 7 project. We celebrate his commitment to a shared belief that we are all treaty people. Middle Bull was the cultural and spiritual advisor to Making Treaty 7; the Grandfather to the cast and crew, and the keeper of our language, culture, and history.

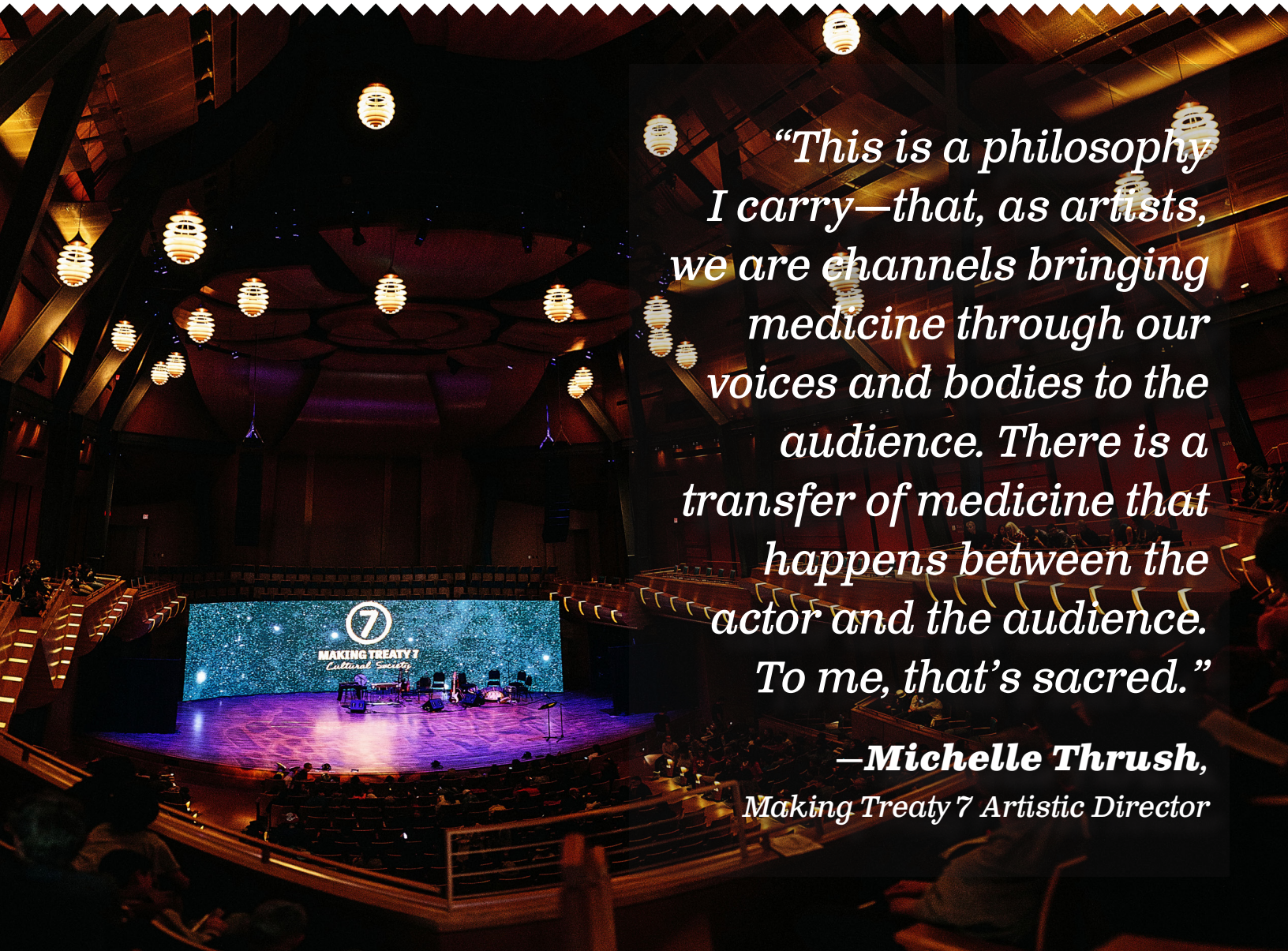
Together, Elk Shadow and Middle Bull brought First Nations and non-First Nations together. They were the heart and soul of Making Treaty 7. Kitaitamatsin (until we meet again).

Working toward repair

We envision a world in which Indigenous Peoples are empowered to share their talents, explore their passions, and express their unique worldviews. But we recognize there is rebuilding to be done. The trauma inflicted by the Indian Residential School System has been passed down to parents, children, and grandchildren. In many ways, art-making today is an act of resilience.

At Making Treaty 7, we work to honour and respect the spirit and intent of Treaty 7 as we seek Indigenous-led solutions to issues facing our communities. We've made it our mission to promote healing by transferring Indigenous knowledge and culture through the arts.

Together with our partners and supporters, we're bringing future generations closer to the friendship, peace between peoples, and reciprocity envisioned in Treaty 7, while creating meaningful connections to Indigenous language, culture, and history.



“This is a philosophy I carry—that, as artists, we are channels bringing medicine through our voices and bodies to the audience. There is a transfer of medicine that happens between the actor and the audience. To me, that’s sacred.”

—Michelle Thrush,
Making Treaty 7 Artistic Director

Cultural Awareness

Making Treaty 7 Cultural Society builds bridges between Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities. We provide access to authentically Indigenous arts and culture that educates, entertains, and forges relationships across cultures and generations.

Cultural Tourism

Making Treaty 7 Cultural Society is part of a large and promising Indigenous tourism community. We produce events that invite Calgarians, and all Canadians, to consider how the long oral history of the land might lead to an enlightened, sustainable future for us all.

Amplifying Indigenous Voices

We offer a safe place for Indigenous artists to be able to explore their truths, share their strengths, develop new skills, and tell their stories. Making Treaty 7 productions are not only entertaining, but also historically accurate and told from an Indigenous perspective.

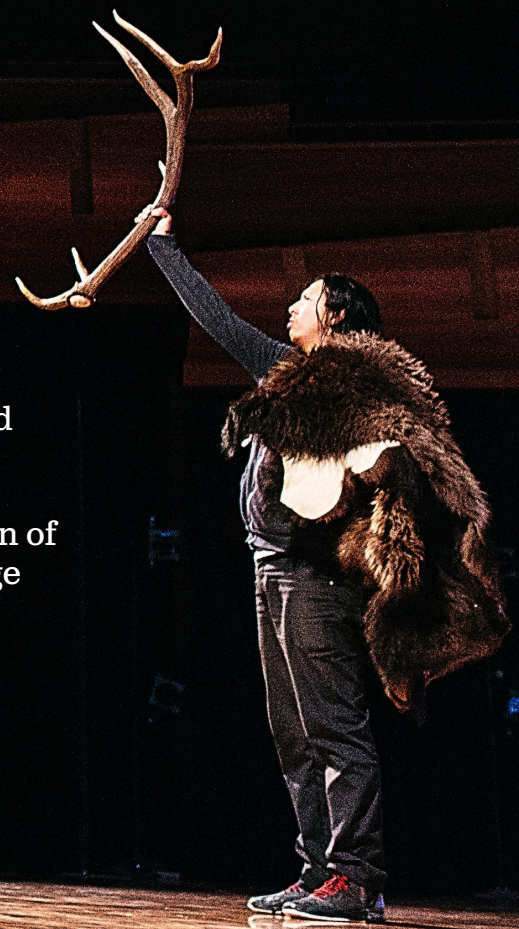
Increasing Representation

We advocate—and create opportunities—for more equitable and diverse representation on and off stage. We provide meaningful opportunities for Indigenous people (who often feel unwelcome in the world of theatre) to shape the way their language, culture, and history is shared.

Building Creative Communities

We strive to foster a community of creative, like-minded people who are doing the work we want to be doing—helping each other learn and grow in a good way. We support, facilitate, and celebrate the creative expression of each individual artist we serve, from directors and stage managers to designers and sound technicians.

Our Impact



Reclamation, reconciliation, and resilience

The Making Treaty 7 story is the story of how we hope to live together in solidarity and in community; coming together as allies and advocates for a better future. When you support Making Treaty 7 Cultural Society, you're supporting cross-community dialogue and the development of right relationships. Not to mention, keeping rich traditions alive for generations to come.

Our Priorities

Audience Expansion

We will build new relationships and broaden our reach both online and in person to inspire more people across Treaty 7.

This includes:

- investing in marketing and communications;
- leveraging Indigenous tourism partners; and,
- ensuring easy access for Indigenous audiences.

Outreach and Education

We will share what we know and what we learn to bridge understanding, break down stereotypes, and raise awareness of Indigenous issues—past and present.

This includes:

- building trust with Indigenous communities;
- facilitating cultural exchange and storytelling; and,
- recruiting and mentoring the next generation of Indigenous artists and arts administrators.

Programming and Production

We will increase funding and resources to sustainably expand our programming, while making it accessible to all.

This includes:

- investing in a fund development strategy;
- developing a sponsorship program;
- building subscription revenue from our online knowledge-sharing platform, Iika'kimaat.



Join the Movement

Donate at makingtreaty7.com or
contact Neil Fleming to discuss opportunities
to fund a project or production.



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