

PRESS RELEASE

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Social justice and environmental themes play out in Indigenous-acted, family-friendly debut at Fringe Festival Kidsfest

Toronto, ON – A hot blooded wasp, an insomniac moth, and an optimistic ladybug join forces with a young girl who has a special power with the wind. Together, they go on an adventure of finding purpose and saving Mother Earth.

Nookie and the Big Wind is an interactive digital play that will debut at Toronto's Fringe Festival Kidsfest from July 21 – 31, 2021. For the first time, the festival will be online and reaching people across the country, so everyone can watch this wildly fun, adventurous story rich with social and environmental justice themes from the comfort of their homes.

Inspired by indigenous wisdom and featuring indigenous and non-indigenous actors, Nookie and the Big Wind is a love story for Mother Earth. Author and playwright Tanya LeBlanc is eleventh generation Acadian French Canadian and has indigenous roots from her father's maternal lineage, however she does not claim to be of the Métis or Mikmaq Nations, but does identify and honour her ancestry. She hopes this story becomes a bridge between these two communities, one of hope and healing for the caretakers of this land, and our home Mother Earth.

Ideas for Nookie and the Big Wind flooded in when Tanya was working on a rooftop patio in Toronto in 2011. Whenever she prepared to open, there was a large moth under the mat, a lady bug that lived on the milk crate, and one annoying wasp that absolutely loved the maraschino cherry juice. A light bulb went off and the characters were instantly created.

“My hope is to inspire children across Canada to stand up for the healing of Mother Earth and the Indigenous communities who take care of her.” says LeBlanc. “We believe that the future of the planet is at stake, and that children are the caretakers of the future. We not only wish to inspire them to connect with the wisdom of nature, but we wish to teach them to have the confidence to use their voice and to stand as allies to the Indigenous communities.”

The interactive play is the first iteration of the yet-to-be published children book series and an online educational program and eventually a touring, in-person interactive show. Online tickets are available at The Fringe Festival website. Gather your friends and family and tune into this wildly fun and endearing adventure. www.fringetoronto.com

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