

MONTREAL THEATRE HUB

**FTA Review: “Windigo” a cutting,
chilling depiction of the repercussions
of Northern destruction**

**LARA KRAMER'S LATEST CONTEMPORARY
CREATION MAKES ITS WORLD PREMIERE AT THE
12TH EDITION OF THE RENOWNED AVANT GARDE
FESTIVAL IN MONTREAL**

June 1, 2018 Camila Fitzgibbon



Windigo (Photo Credit: Frederic Chai)

A darkly veiled contemporary Canadian reality has found an opening at Festival TransAmériques in a robust new theatrical work by one of the country’s increasingly prominent and vital artistic voices.

Montreal-based director, choreographer, and scenographer Lara Kramer (whose artistry can also be doted on at this year’s FTA in the immersive installation “*Phantom Stills & Vibrations*“, presented at the MAI through June 7th), has here devised a cutting piece summoning the angst, boredom, and despair brought on by the prevailing Northern First Nation realities of isolation, oppression, and destruction – physical, social, cultural, spiritual, and otherwise. Inspired by her Oji-Cree ancestry and driven by her desire to reconnect with her origins, “*Windigo*” is the the creative outcome of her meticulous research efforts and a carting of the trauma of past generations.



Windigo (Photo Credit: Frederic Chais)

A in-view fixture herself in the vast performance space, Kramer here situates us in the unnerving presence of two “invisible” men: homeless nomads foraging for clothing, food, and shelter – and, perhaps more pressingly, vestiges of connection, meaning, and hope. Lone, wandering survivors of bodily and territorial devastation, their instincts lead their interactions with their environments. To kill the hours, they resort to mutilating and skinning mattresses – a striking visual metaphor for an alarmingly commonplace phenomenon.

Painstakingly slow, the piece indeed knowingly gives one bounteous time and space to feel the unsettling void. In the barren landscape and chilling silence we become sensitized to the loss of identity and learned helplessness. The visceral performances by Peter James and Jassem Hindi, aided by the rich symbolism and powerful imagery in the production, collectively conjure the wind of suffering of a marginalized group.

A relevant piece portraying the profound repercussions of violence and abuse inflicted on Aboriginal lands and peoples, “*Windigo*” proceeds to point to the culture of silence among colonial society, that which continues to fail to acknowledge and address the urgent trials and tribulations of remote indigenous communities. A denunciation of a neglected destruction, it’s a deserving discovery at this year’s FTA.



The 12th Edition of the Festival TransAmériques presents

Windigo

Lara Kramer

Espace Libre
1945, Fullum Street
Metro Frontenac

May 31, June 1*, and June 2 at 7 p.m.
*Meet the artists after the performance

1h15 | in English

\$25 to 30

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