

WELCOME TO INDIAN COUNTRY

ENRICHING LIVES THROUGH MUSIC

Sukin
SERIES



BILLINGS
SYMPHONY

2022-2023



SATURDAY | **AUG. 13**

406 Events Lawn

Doors at 4PM | Performance at 7PM

Welcome to Indian Country

SATURDAY, AUG. 13, 2022 | 7PM | RED OXX EVENTS LAWN

Andre Bouchard | *Producer, Artistic Director*

Rena Priest | *Poet/Storyteller*

Nokosee Fields | *Fiddle/Guitar/Composition*

Delbert Anderson | *Musical Director/ Trumpet/Composition*

Lyz Jaakola | *Arrangement/Vocals/ Piano/Guitar*

Mali Obomsawin | *Composition/Bass/Vocals*

Christine Bartyzal | *Percussion*

The Billings Symphony and the Pretty Shield Foundation have partnered to bring to Billings *Welcome to Indian Country*, a celebration of Native culture through music and storytelling. A world class five-piece musical ensemble is joined by storyteller and Washington State Poet Laureate Rena Priest. Together they weave new compositions and songs with witty wise and poignant poetry and satire to honor the elders and ancestors. Their performance unearths the depth, joy and solidarity that Native people find in their community, culture and family.

The program will be presented in two parts, starting at 5PM with The Pretty Shield Foundation, which provided two teepees (lodges) for the event. President and Founder William Snell, Jr. will host a presentation on the cultural significant of the teepee, erected in the style of the Apsáalooke (Crow) people.

This will be – for many people – the first time they have seen teepees erected in the river valley of Billings, the unceded scared homelands of Crow, Northern Cheyenne, Sioux, and Blackfeet people. Billings – and the event venue – is nestled between the Yellowstone River to the south and the Rimrocks to the north, on the eastern edge of the area historically known as Clark's Fork Bottom, though many Indigenous people refer to land as part of the Elk River Watershed.

According to reporting by The Billings Gazette, "Prior to the city of Billings popping up on the plains, the cliffs were known as a sacred site by the Crow Indians. It was there that Chief Four Dances held a vision quest in the 1830s. Somewhere in history, his ties to the place were obscured by another Crow story of young warriors killing themselves after finding their families dead from smallpox. Although on some maps the Four Dances area is noted as Sacrifice Cliff, historians are generally in agreement that feature is across the river close to MetraPark."

CONCERT SPONSORS

Humanities
MONTANA



SUKIN SERIES SPONSOR

we are one
Sibanye
Stillwater

Scan the QR code for
the full 2022–2023
season digital **Playbill**.





Andrew Bouchard | Producer, Artistic Director

Andre Bouchard (of Kootenai/Ojibwe/Pend d'Oreille/Salish descent) is an internationally recognized agent, producer and consultant who was born and raised on the Flathead Reservation in western Montana the son a CSKT enrolled father and a white mother. As a person with a background in both Native and non-native worlds Andre aspires to serve as an inter-cultural activist, working to build bridges and reverse the invisibility that serves to marginalize Native people in the US. Andre's primary background is as producer of dance, theatre, music and multi-disciplinary performance but has worked in practically every roll in the performing arts since he began as

an active artist and arts administrator in 1999 In 2001 he founded Walrus Performance Productions, a non-profit dedicated to providing first opportunities to choreographers, playwrights and multi-disciplinary performing artists in the Pacific Northwest. In 2010 he founded Walrus Arts Management and Consulting which was expanded in 2015 to serve as a home to the first Native run performing arts booking agency representing Indigenous dance, theatre, music and multi-disciplinary artists. In 2019 he founded Indigenous Performance Productions, a non-profit company dedicated to production of touring Indigenous performing arts festivals.



Rena Priest | Poet/Storyteller

Rena Priest is a Poet and an enrolled member of the Lhaq'temish (Lummi) Nation. She has been appointed to serve as Washington State's Poet Laureate for the term of April 2021-2023. She is also the recipient of the Vadon Foundation Fellowship (2020), and an Allied Arts Foundation Professional Poets Award (2020). She has attended residencies at Hedgebrook, Mineral School, and Hawthornden Castle. Her debut collection, Patriarchy Blues was published by MoonPath Press and received an American Book Award. Her second collection, Sublime Subliminal is available from Floating Bridge Press. Priest has also published non-fiction pieces in High Country News,

YES! Magazine, Seattle Met, Adventures NW, and Nautilus. She is a National Geographic Explorer (2018-2020) and a Jack Straw Writer (2019). She holds an MFA from Sarah Lawrence College.



Nokosee Fields | Fiddle/Guitar/Composition

Nokosee Fields(Osage) was born and raised in Stillwater, Oklahoma, studying orchestral violin at a young age. After years of learning and performing Classical music, Nokosee turned his attention to traditional American music, performing, teaching, and touring professionally. As a bassist, he tours with the Country band Western Centuries, as well as the old time band Steam Machine. As a teacher, he has taught at the Augusta Heritage Center, tutored at Centrum's festival of American fiddle tunes, and was the artist in residence for the Portland old time gathering. He's placed in numerous fiddle contests and most notably took first in the 2019 Clifftop Fiddle Competition. Nokosee's

lengthy and diverse experience in the performing arts gives him a unique approach to creating, listening and facilitating music.



Delbert Anderson | Musical Director/ Trumpet/Composition

Delbert Anderson, Diné, (Navajo) Director to Welcome To Indian Country is enjoying a music career as one of today's most forward thinking artists. Recording, touring, community outreach, music educational workshops, composing/arranging and guest appearances keep Anderson busy not only in his hometown of Farmington, NM but worldwide. Anderson has been featured on JazzTimes, Grammy.com, NASA, NPR Music Top 10, Smithsonian Magazine, Yahoo/Mic.com, TEDx, PBS, FNX Television and much more. Anderson has also been awarded the 2021 Presenters Consortium for Jazz Award from Chamber Music America funded by the Doris Duke Charitable

Foundation, 2021 Jazz Road Creative Residency from South Arts funded by Doris Duke Charitable Foundation and the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, 2021 Emerging/Leaders of Color Program from Western States Arts Federation and the 2019 Native Launchpad Award by Advancing Indigenous Performance with Western Arts Alliance.



Lyz Jaakola | Arrangement/Vocals/ Piano/Guitar

Lyz Jaakola, is an enrolled Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Tribal member who intertwines making art, music and educating. Lyz has been performing/singing in various styles and venues such as traditional women's hand drum circles, blues bands, and jazz stages in Midwest performances while also teaching at Fond du Lac Tribal & Community College. A reservation-based performer, Lyz is very busy parenting 3 wonderful children, a Native Nation Rebuilder, and has received recognition as Arrowhead Regional Arts Council George Morrison Artist Award, AICF Faculty of the year, Ordway's Sally Award for Arts Educators, and First People's Fund Community Spirit Award. Lyz will be the first to say that any honors and recognition belong to our ancestors for all they have endured and retained so that we may be Anishinaabe.



Mali Obomsawin | Composition/Bass/Vocals

Mali Obomsawin is a musician, activist, and citizen of the Abenaki First Nation at Odanak. She is a bassist, songwriter, composer, and singer, with an eclectic background in pop, free/avant-garde music, and American roots styles. Obomsawin tours internationally with her indie-folk-rock band Lula Wiles (Smithsonian Folkways Recordings), and gigs as a freelance bassist in New York City where she resides. As an Indigenous liberation activist and scholar, she has most recently published her work in Smithsonian Folklife Magazine and the Boston Globe. She received a B.A. in Government and Comparative Literature from Dartmouth College in 2018.



Christine Bartyzal | Percussion

Christine Bartyzal is an enrolled member of the Crow Creek tribe representing the Oceti Šakowij (7 Council Fires) of the Dakhóta Nation. Born in Sisseton, South Dakota and raised in Minnesota, Christine studied concert band clarinet at a young age and performed from elementary school throughout high school and beyond. With a deep-rooted love for all things music, Christine taught herself to play guitar and drums which lead to her forming, writing music for and performing with several rock bands within the Twin Cities metro area of Minneapolis and Saint Paul, Minnesota. A few highlights include being featured in a public television documentary, performing with her band Les Speedos in Nantes, France and bringing awareness to Indigenous people having a place in music and performing arts. Currently, Christine plays percussion for a rock band called Pretendians. Despite the name, Pretendians is a Native American rock band whose songs have societal and political influences with views from a modern Indigenous perspective.

**OUR
MISSION**



**BILLINGS
SYMPHONY**

Founded as the Billings Symphony Society in May 1951, the organization's mission is to enrich lives through music. Today that mission remains the driving force behind the Billings Symphony.

ANNE HARRIGAN, Vincent W. & Janet M. Carpenter Music Director

IGNACIO BARRÓN VIELA, John W. & Carol L. H. Green Executive Director

2820 2nd Ave. N. | Billings MT 59101 | symphony@billingsssymphony.org | 406-252-3610