

Audio Preshow Note Transcript for *The Unplugging*

Welcome, this is the audio preshow note for The Unplugging, written by Yvette Nolan and directed by Katey Wattam.

The play's story begins in a post-apocalyptic future, where the world no longer has electricity and digital technology. We meet two middle-aged women venturing into a frozen landscape after being exiled from their community. Relying on one another, they push each other to survive and thrive in balance with nature. In doing so they revive their Indigenous knowledge and traditions to survive the harsh winter. Between them, they create a new community. Their newfound harmony is disrupted when a man arrives at their place in the woods. This stranger challenges their trust and threatens the foundation of what they have built. Dealing with themes of survival, ageism and knowledge-keeping, we watch as a new possible world forms.

The play is approximately 75 minutes long with no intermission.

Please be advised that this play includes discussions of suicide, death, the threat of violence, fighting, and sexuality. There is a depiction of oral sex. There is a prop rifle onstage and there are sounds of gunshots.

While GCTC strives to be a scent-free environment this production includes natural materials with scents as part of centering Indigenous practices. Due to the GCTC's fire system, burning smudge is not possible. We invite you to use the liquid smudge in the upper lobby both before and after the performance to ground and take care of yourself. We kindly ask that you continue to arrive scent-free. Also, the set is made with natural materials, specifically cedar, mulch and moss, which have scent. There is also a liquid haze effect used. Later in the play, fresh cedar is prepared for tea and the cedar smell may be present. For a full ingredient list and scents used in the play and lobby please refer to the GCTC show page or ask at the box office.

The set is in place when we enter the theatre and is on the same level as the first rows of the audience. It takes up the full width of the theatre, about 12 paces wide, and is 10 paces deep. It is a snowy landscape with tall birch trees and an impression of a small wooden cabin. On our left at the edge of the width of the stage and about 3 paces back stands a tall trunk of a birch tree that extends up past our sight on the vertical space. At the back left corner and extending across the rear of the stage is a small raised rocky platform. About 1 step high and 3 paces wide. The grey slate rock is blanketed by white

snow covering what will later reveal grass, according to the progression of the moon cycles. Erupting out of this formation is another towering birch tree trunk.

Along the back wall is a black scrim, which is a thin woven black curtain for projections. Throughout the performance, colours and lush forest shadows are projected upon the curtain. On our right, taking up the full right side of the stage is a suggestion of a cabin. On an angled raised platform are dirty wooden floorboards that rise up to form the corner of the cabin. Nestled in the corner is a black iron wood stove with its pipe rising up and out of view like the trees. Hanging from above are six kitchen tools: a colander, a potato ricer, a pan, a kettle, a box grater, and a manual egg beater. Connected to the stove are two sets of shelves making up the back wall and kitchen. The shelves are about waist high, with two shelves on either side of the stove. Set on these shelves are small tin mugs, a pot, and a stove kettle. Eventually, the shelves will be filled with a sparse amount of non-perishable cans and boxes of food.

At the front of the cabin and close to the audience is a tall grey rock that serves as the kitchen table with two wooden chairs. At the rightmost corner close to the audience is another towering birch tree trunk with moose antlers carefully placed around the base of the tree. The roof of the cabin hangs above, resembling a fish skeleton. The head and tail are made of cedar shingles and the body is made of wooden slats pieced together to form the skeleton. The head of the fish hangs over the middle of the stage, while the body curves around the cabin and the tree trunk on the right, leaving the tail pointing to the audience. Surrounding the cabin is snow which eventually melts to reveal grass.

At the edge of the stage in the center is a decomposing log with moss growing on it. To the left of the log, about one pace and placed in the middle of the stage are two rocks, one tall about the size of a high chair with another smaller one in front, similar to a footrest size. The stage floor is painted like the earth matching the natural materials of the world, with the edge of the stage closest to the audience painted to resemble snow. During transition periods in the play a moon is projected on the ground in the center of the playing space. It moves through the different phases of the moon.

The costumes are consistent with the post-apocalyptic society, where garments are patched up with other pieces of clothing. This patchwork is present in all three of the characters' costumes. We meet both female characters as they venture through the snowstorm that has been transpiring while the audience enters the theatre.

Miali Buscemi is an Inuk woman with a slender build and just below-average height. She wears glasses most of the time. She has black and mauve-coloured hair that hangs just below her shoulders. She plays Bern, who is a nondisabled woman in her late 40s with her hair pulled back into braids. She wears a patched denim jacket with an ivory-coloured knitted shawl stitched on top. She has a big knitted hood drawn around

her head and wears light grey, thick woollen mittens. Her pants are a repurposed blue star-patterned fabric with blanket fringe on the outside of each leg. Her brown military boots peak out below the long pants. Later her coat is removed, revealing a light blue hoodie top that is wrapped with cream and light pink fabric similar to a corset. She changes out of her pants into a long skirt that resembles a ribbon skirt, made up of various plaid, brown and white lace. In the spring she wears black leggings with knee-high socks with her tall brown military boots.

Heather Majaury is a 57-year-old woman and uses she/her pronouns and sometimes they. She is of average height, a larger woman who has brown, shoulder-length hair. Her heritage is both Indigenous and settler. She plays Elena, a middle-aged woman who first appears bundled up in a long puffer coat. The coat is coloured in an ombre effect from yellow to blue, resembling a sunset. The top part of the coat has a blue jean chest insert. Wrapped around her head is a white crochet scarf, on her feet grey fur-trimmed mukluks and on her hands large blue woollen mittens. Eventually, she removes her coat revealing a sweater assembled with various knitted patches and a long straight skirt made of various quilt fabric swatches in cool light blue tones. In the spring she removes the knitted sweater to reveal that the skirt is attached to a jean overalls top. She also wears a collared shirt with rolled-up sleeves, ombre-dyed similar to her winter coat.

Lolo Sirois is a white, slim, genderqueer person of average height with chronic illness. Lolo plays Seamus who is a white, slim, young able-bodied man. He wears dark brown camo colours. His jacket combines camo materials and one sleeve made from an Adidas black sports jacket with white stripes. Underneath appears to be a black shirt, with a large make-shift cross body pack made from an old pair of brown pants. It hangs over his chest. He wears baggy brown pants with many patches of camo and brown fabric, and his pants are tucked into black mismatched military-style boots. One boot is mid-calf height and the other is above his ankle. He wears a brown toque over his black rugged mullet. Later in spring, he wears a lighter shirt that has a white collar and is sewn into an oversized dark plaid shirt. The look is finished with an orange toque.

For more information on The Unplugging please read our program available at gctc.ca/program. For questions please contact the box office by email boxoffice@gctc.ca or by phone 613-236-5196.

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