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Journey to Mutum: A Cultural Encounter with the Yawanawa Tribe of the Brazilian Amazon

Presented by Miami Theater Center in collaboration with Indigenous Celebration and the support of the National Endowment for the Arts

MIAMI, FL, September 19, 2016 /24-7PressRelease/ -- Miami Theater Center (MTC) in collaboration with Indigenous Celebration is proud to present Journey to Mutum: a Cultural Encounter with the Yawanawa of the Brazilian Amazon, featuring rituals never-before-seen in the United States. From deep in the Amazon forest of Acre, Brazil, eight members of the Yawanawa Tribe take a journey from their home to share their sacred songs, ancestral dance, language, and spiritual heritage. Be among the first to experience this intimate, once-in-a-lifetime encounter with a culture that lives in true harmony with nature.



The members of the Yawanawa Tribe who are participating in "Journey to Mutum" have trained with an elder named Paje (shaman) Tata who is approximately 98 years old - and only one of two remaining elders of the tribe. Knowledge is passed down from one generation to the next through the spiritual initiation known as the "Muka Dieta". This involves a year-long spiritual diet and several months of isolation in the forest where they train with their tribal elder - dedicating themselves to studying the spiritual and ceremonial traditions of the tribe.

In addition to the seventy-five minute "Journey to Mutum" experience at MTC, the Yawanawa will host a "Family Day" of tribal games, body-painting, story-telling, jewelry-making, and dancing on the lush grounds of The Kampong in Coconut Grove. Additionally, a fundraising "Community Dinner with the Yawanawa" will also be held at The Kampong. These extraordinary events are brought to us by MTC's collaboration with Indigenous Celebration, The Kampong of the National Tropical Botanical Garden, and Florida International University's Program in the Study of Spirituality.

MTC has been able to embark on a wonderful journey of Indigenous initiatives thanks to the support of the National Endowment for the Arts. "We are very grateful for the collaboration of all of our partners and for the NEA's support in helping us build relationships with Indigenous people from this continent and others," says Stephanie Ansin, MTC's founder and artistic director.

The National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) has approved more than \$82 million to fund local arts projects and partnerships in 2016, including an Art Works award of \$10,000 to MTC for their project, "Indigenous Allies." NEA Chairman, Jane Chu, says, "The arts are all around us, enhancing our lives in ways both subtle and obvious, expected and unexpected. Supporting projects like the one from Miami Theater Center offers more opportunities to engage in the arts every day."

Journey to Mutum: A Cultural Encounter with the Yawanawa of the Brazilian Amazon is just part one of the two-part "Indigenous Allies" project. For part two of the project, MTC collaborates with Indigenous Direction (Native American theater artists Larissa FastHorse of Sicangu Lakota Nation and Ty Defoe of the Oneida/Ojibwe tribe) and Houston Cypress of the Miccosukee Tribe. This collaboration will include writing and playwriting workshops and a series of presentations in efforts to create relationships among MTC and local communities of Indigenous peoples living in South Florida and their non-Indigenous allies.

Officially launching its five-city North American tour, Journey to Mutum: a Cultural Encounter with the Yawanawa of the Brazilian Amazon premieres on the main stage at Miami Theater Center, September 29th, 2016. Show times are Thursday, September 29th at 10 am; Friday, September 30th at 10am; and Saturday, October 1st at 8pm. Appropriate for all ages. Tickets: \$30 General Admission; \$25 for Seniors, Students w/ valid I.D. & Children under 12. Proceeds will benefit the establishment of the Traditional School of Mutum (TSM) in the Mutum Village of Acre, Brazil for Yawanawa children ages 7-14.

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Journey to Mutum: a Cultural Encounter
with the Yawanawa of the Brazilian Amazon
September 29 - October 1, 2016

Sacred music. Tribal dance. Experience the never-before-seen rituals of the Yawanawa Tribe of the Brazilian Amazon here on our stage, and be among the first to welcome them to Miami. They will journey from their home to bring an Indigenous celebration that is sure to transport you - don't miss this once-in-a-lifetime event.

Thursday and Friday, September 29 & 30, at 10am
Saturday, October 1 at 8pm
Appropriate for all ages
Tickets: \$30 General Admission; \$25 for Seniors, Students w/ valid I.D. & Children under 12

Miami Theater Center - MainStage
9806 NE 2nd Avenue
Miami Shores, FL 33138

For tickets: mtcmiami.org
Call for information: 305-751-9550

RELATED EVENTS

Community Dinner with the Yawanawa
September 30, 2016

"Community Dinner with the Yawanawa" is a fundraiser in support of the Traditional School of Mutum.

Friday, September 30 at 7pm
Tickets: \$50 per person. Sponsorship packages available.

The Kampong
4013 Douglas Road
Miami, FL 33133

For tickets: <http://www.ictickets.org/get#miami>
Call for information: 305-751-9550

Family Day at the Kampong
October 1, 2016

Enjoy interacting with Yawanawa Tribe members and experiencing their games, body painting, music, dancing, and jewelry-making surrounded by the lush, tropical gardens of The Kampong.

Saturday, October 1, 10am - 2pm
Tickets: Free with admission to The Kampong
(\$15 adults; \$5 children 4 -12; 3 and under free)

The Kampong
4013 Douglas Road
Miami, FL 33133

For tickets: <http://www.ictickets.org/get#miami>
Call for information: 305-751-9550

indigenouselebration.org

ABOUT NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE ARTS

Established by Congress in 1965, the NEA is the independent federal agency whose funding and support gives Americans the opportunity to participate in the arts, exercise their imaginations, and develop their creative capacities. Through partnerships with state arts agencies, local leaders, other federal agencies, and the philanthropic sector, the NEA supports arts learning, affirms and celebrates America's rich and diverse cultural heritage, and extends its work to promote equal access to the arts in every community across America. This year marks the 50th anniversary of the National Endowment for the Arts and the agency is celebrating this milestone with events and activities through 2016.

For information call: 305-751-9550

arts.gov

ABOUT INDIGENOUS CELEBRATION

Indigenous Celebration, Inc. is a Florida based 501(c)(3) non-profit company that was formed in April of 2015 to facilitate the exchange and preservation of the unique culture of Indigenous Peoples of North and South America. IC works to preserve unique Indigenous Cultures by sharing them with people in the western world so that we can all see the value and beauty of Indigenous Peoples.

Funds raised by Indigenous Celebration's Journey to Mutum tour will be allocated towards establishing the Traditional School of Mutum (TSM) in the Mutum Village of Acre, Brazil for Yawanawa children ages 7-14. The TSM will provide food, lodging and school supplies to children learning their native Yawanawa language, traditional legends, ancestral spiritual practices and sacred plant knowledge, as passed down orally from generation to generation.

ABOUT MIAMI THEATER CENTER

Your Home for Culture and the Arts

Led by Miami native and Artistic Director Stephanie Ansin, Miami Theater Center creates, develops, and produces stimulating, inspiring, and thought-provoking productions for audiences of all ages and abilities. We are committed to providing the very best in cultural value to our community, and to ensuring that everyone who enters our theater or engages with our organization feels the warmth of our welcome, and the transformational power of the performing arts.

MTC's initiatives include: MTCperformance, innovative theater, dance, and music; MTCeducation, learning opportunities for students, professionals, and members of the general public; and MTCfilm, partnerships with O Cinema and local film festivals that turns MTC into a movie theater 100 times a year. For more information, visit www.mtcmiami.org or call 305.751.9550.

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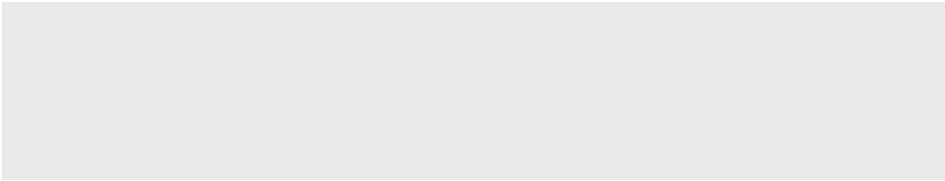
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