

## GEVA THEATRE PRESENTS THE EAST COAST PREMIERE OF *PURE NATIVE* BY VICKIE RAMIREZ On Stage April 15 - May 11

**Rochester, N.Y.** — Geva brings *Pure Native* by **Vickie Ramirez (Tuscarora)** to the Willson Stage this April. The production is directed by **Randy Reinholz (Choctaw)** and is in association with **Friends of Ganondagan** and **Native Voices**. *Pure Native* tells the story of Brewster, who is back after almost a decade and things have changed. Brews is proud of his success working for a large corporation, and wants to share it with the people of his Rez in Upstate New York. After all, it's been a bad year, and Brews believes partnering with his corporation on a new bottled water factory would be a great opportunity for the Rez to create its own industry and sustain itself. But to his old love Connie, it's a betrayal of everything the Haudenosaunee stand for. Who will win? This production runs on the Wilson Stage April 15 - May 11, 2025. Tickets are on sale now; visit [GevaTheatre.org](http://GevaTheatre.org) or call the Box Office at 585-232-GEVA(4382).

Director Randy Reinholz (Choctaw) shared his excitement about bringing the show to Rochester, saying, "I'm thrilled to direct this groundbreaking production of Vickie Ramirez's soulful and funny *Pure Native*. Vickie worked on this script in Los Angeles at Native Voices in 2019. We had a stunning production there and were headed to the Smithsonian's National Museum of the American Indian in Washington, D.C., when all theatre production was brought to a standstill by the pandemic. We are so grateful to Geva Theatre, Native Voices, and Friends of Ganondagan for providing us with the artistic home to bring together an all-Native American cast of nationally celebrated actors to work alongside an all-Native American creative team supported by local artisans in this lavish production, set in contemporary Haudenosaunee country in Upstate New York."

Playwright Vickie Ramirez (Tuscarora) echoed Reinholz's enthusiasm, stating, "As a Tuscarora playwright, I'm beyond thrilled that *Pure Native* is making its East Coast debut, co-produced by the world-renowned Geva Theatre, Friends of Ganondagan, and Native Voices! It's a true honor to reunite with Randy Reinholz, who first brought this play to life with Native Voices in 2019. Staged on the traditional territories of the Haudenosaunee people, I can't wait to see how this production resonates with both Indigenous and non-Indigenous audiences alike, especially since we all share a deep, undeniable connection to the land and our waters."

**Geva Theatre Artistic Director Elizabeth Williamson** added "We are so happy to be continuing our partnerships with Native Voices and Friends of Ganondagan with this collaboration around Vickie Ramirez' beautiful and moving play, *Pure Native*!"

**Ansley Jemison** (Seneca, Wolf Clan), who is serving as the Cultural Liaison on this production, also shared his perspective, saying, "I am thrilled to partner with Geva Theatre to present *Pure*

*Native*, a powerful play by Tuscarora playwright Vickie Ramirez. It's an honor to share this story with our youth and elders through our community outreach initiatives. I hope that this outreach will inspire the next generation of Indigenous youth to see themselves as storytellers in this art form."

Jemison continued, "I'd like to express my deepest gratitude to Vickie Ramirez for crafting this beautiful story and for trusting Native Voices, Geva Theatre, and the Friends of Ganondagan to bring it home and amplify the voices of Indigenous Peoples. Nya:wëh Swagewe:göh (Thank you everyone)."

**DeLanna Studi** (Cherokee Nation), Artistic Director of Native Voices, Geva's 24/26 Artist in Residence, and an actor who will be performing in *Pure Native*, emphasized why this production is so important. "When Geva asked Native Voices to recommend Indigenous plays for consideration for forthcoming seasons, *Pure Native* by Vickie Ramirez immediately came to mind," she shared. "*Pure Native* is full of heart and soul, tackling timely issues that resonate globally regardless of any demographic while recognizing the regional implications of Indigenous communities. It's a beautiful story that everyone should see."

#### **The Cast:**

**DeLanna Studi** (Cherokee Nation, she/her) returns to the Geva stage as Karen after appearing in her dramatic memoir *And So We Walked* in 2023 (TV: *Reservation Dogs*, *Shameless*; Regional Theatre: Oregon Shakespeare Festival, Portland Center Stage, Cornerstone, and Indiana Repertory Theater). The rest of the cast includes **Derek Garza** (Wichita/Comanche, he/him) as Art (TV: *Chicago Fire*; Regional Theatre: Oregon Shakespeare Festival, Ford's Theatre, McCarter Theatre), **Kalani Queypo** as Brewster (TV: *Jamestown*, *Fear the Walking Dead*), **Tanis Parenteau** (Métis Nation of Alberta, she/her) as Connie (TV: *Gossip Girl*, *Billions*; Regional Theatre: The Public Theater, Signature Theatre), and **Jake Waid** as Gary (Regional Theatre: Theater Alaska, Shakespeare & Company).

#### **The Creative Team:**

The creative team includes Director **Randy Reinholz** (The Public Theater, La Jolla Playhouse, Perseverance Theatre, Oregon Shakespeare Festival), Scenic Designer **Troy Hourie** (The Glimmerglass Festival, Cherry Lane Theatre, The Guthrie, Bay Street Theatre, Huntington Theatre), Costume Designer **Asa Benally** (Keen Theater Company, The Public Theater Mobile Unit, George Street Playhouse, Perseverance Theater), Lighting Designer **Emma Deane** (Geva Theatre, Guthrie Theater, Signature Theatre NYC, Everyman Theater), Sound Designer **Ed Littlefield/Shaa<sup>k</sup>industóow** (Theater Alaska, Jolla Playhouse, Perseverance Theater, Oregon Shakespeare Festival), with Cultural Liaison **Ansley Jemison**. The Production Stage Manager is **Kevin Gregory Dwyer** (he/him) with Assistant Stage Manager **Julia Bregy** (she/her).

Geva's 52nd Season is sponsored by ESL Federal Credit Union with Honorary Season Producer Dr. Dawn Lipson. *Pure Native* is presented with support from Lead Producer Buckingham Properties and Media Sponsors WXXI and iHeart Radio.

**CONNECTIVITY at Geva:** Programming presented in conjunction with *Pure Native*, check the Geva [website](#) for event details.

**Geva Insights | Tuesday, April 22 • FREE**

A post-performance conversation with members of the *Pure Native* cast, crew, and community.

**Mondays at Geva | Monday, April 28, 6 - 8 p.m. • FREE**

The stages are dark on Monday evenings at Geva, so the art and action shift to the lobby and café where brilliant local visual artists, performers, musicians, and speakers broaden our consideration of the onstage productions. Join us for an evening of culture, community, and celebrating Indigenous excellence, featuring traditional foods, tabling from community organizations, and artwork from local Indigenous makers on display and for sale.

**Haudenosaunee Performance | Sunday, May 11, 2pm • Tickets Required**

Celebrate the closing performance of this production with an afternoon of community and connection for Indigenous audience members and performers to enjoy together. Non-Indigenous patrons are also welcome to attend.

**TICKET AND PERFORMANCE INFORMATION**

**When:** April 15 - May 11, 2025

**Where:** On the Wilson Stage, 75 Woodbury Boulevard, Rochester, New York 14607

**To Purchase:** Tickets may be purchased [online](#), by calling 585-232-GEVA(4382), or in-person from the Box Office. *All prices, dates, and times are subject to change.*

**Accessibility:** Learn about our accessibility options [here](#).

**About Geva Theatre**

Founded in 1972, Geva Theatre is a not-for-profit, professional theatre company dedicated to creating and producing professional theatre productions, programs, and services of a national standard.

Geva offers a wide variety of educational, engagement, and literary programs, nurturing audiences and artists alike. Geva Theatre sits on the ancestral and unceded territory of the O-non-dowa-gah, or “the people of the Great Hill.” In English, they are known as the Seneca people, “the keeper of the western door.” They have stewarded this land through generations, and Geva pays respect and gives thanks to their elders, past and present.

Geva is under the leadership of Artistic Director Elizabeth Williamson and Executive Director James Haskins.

Find out more about Geva Theatre at [GevaTheatre.org](http://GevaTheatre.org) or by connecting with us on social media. Facebook: [facebook.com/gevatheatrecenter](https://facebook.com/gevatheatrecenter), Twitter: [@gevatheatre](https://twitter.com/gevatheatre), Instagram: [@gevatheatre](https://instagram.com/gevatheatre), LinkedIn: [linkedin.com/company/geva-theatre-center](https://linkedin.com/company/geva-theatre-center).

**About Friends of Ganondagan** - The Friends of Ganondagan, is an Indigenous led not for profit, 501c (3) corporation created in 1989 as an educational partner to Ganondagan State Historic Site, located in Victor, NY on the traditional homelands of the Onöndawa'ga:' (Seneca) people.

Friends of Ganondagan provides cultural programming and community events to enrich the understanding of Seneca and Haudenosaunee values, culture, and contemporary life. Friends of Ganondagan's mission is to share Seneca and Haudenosaunee history, culture, and values through authentic, engaging, and transformational programming. We seek to educate Seneca and Haudenosaunee people living on and off reservations, Indigenous peoples, and non-Native Americans, acting as a bridge between and within cultures. We are dedicated to developing Indigenous youth and educating them in the wisdom of their Elders. We believe through collaborating with other Indigenous peoples, and diverse cultural and religious communities, our common vision of peace, cooperation, gratitude and respect for others and the natural world will be realized.

### **About Native Voices**

For the past 30 years, Native Voices has remained the sole Actors' Equity theatre in the country committed to developing and producing new works for the stage by Native American, First Nations, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian playwrights. Devoted to training Indigenous artists and championing their work nationally through production and professional development opportunities, Native Voices provides a supportive setting for new play development. When founders Randy Reinholz (Choctaw) and Jean Bruce Scott entrusted their legacy to DeLanna Studi (Cherokee) and Elisa Blandford in 2020, the company's goals remained the same -- to foster greater understanding and respect for all and to showcase artistic voices that might otherwise not be heard. Native Voices remains steadfast in their mission of developing Native playwrights and theatre artists, to telling Native stories by and about Native people, and to providing the public access to these plays and playwrights, but now with the hope of Indigenizing theatre, both for artists and audiences, and to create pathways of learning for the next generations of storytellers and audience members.

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