



HOPKINS CENTER
FOR THE ARTS

presents

Music Department Residency

TANYA TAGAQ

in concert with

NANOOK OF THE NORTH

Post-Performance Discussion

You are invited to remain in the theater immediately following the performance for an informal discussion with the artists.

Funded in part by the Wetzel Family Fund for the Arts, the Arthur J. 1903 and Nellie Z. Cohen Foundation, the Nathan W. Pearson 1932 and Sons Fund, the Chandler Distinguished Lecturer Fund.

Friday, January 23, 2015 • 8 pm

Loew Auditorium • Dartmouth College

CREDITS

Tonight's performance is presented without an intermission.

Tanya Tagaq *vocals*
Jean Martin *drums*
Jesse Zubot *violin*

Tanya Tagaq in concert with *Nanook of the North* was commissioned by TIFF Bell Lightbox as part of its film retrospective First People's Cinema: 1500 Nations, One Tradition.

Nanook of the North film is used courtesy of The Flaherty.

Exclusive management for Tanya Tagaq: Helen Britton, Six Shooter Records; [www.http://sixshooterrecords.com/](http://sixshooterrecords.com/)
Exclusive U.S. representation: Sue Bernstein, Bernstein Artists, Inc.; www.bernsarts.com

PROGRAM NOTES

Innovative vocalist Tanya Tagaq can capture the most ethereal moments of desire, or find the deepest, huskiest, beating pulse, with her voice and breath. She can create a soundscape from inhalation and exhalation, summon a powerful emotion from the smallest movement of lips, throat and lungs. Her intense, evocative vocalizations, based on Inuit throat singing traditions, help reclaim the controversial 1922 film *Nanook of the North*. Tagaq, along with percussionist Jean Martin and violinist Jesse Zubot perform a live accompaniment to the film's silent images of life in an early 20th-century Inuit community in Northern Quebec.

Working with composer Derek Charke (whose *Tundra Songs* Tagaq performed with the Kronos Quartet), Tagaq employs exquisite improvisations with traditional roots, a style she has perfected over a decade of performances on major stages worldwide, as well as with collaborations with everyone from Björk (Tagaq joined her on the *Medúlla* tour) to Mike Patton (who contributed to Tagaq's 2009 Juno-nominated album *Auk/Blood*).

Commissioned by the Toronto Film Festival for their First Nations Film Festival, Tagaq's work with *Nanook* and with Charke began with a sonic exploration of the film's imagery, images that spoke

deeply to the vocalist. "The film expresses a lot of what I'm thinking and feeling," Tagaq reflects. "It softened my anger about some of the great difficulties facing my community and put some beauty in there. It's so hard to capture the absolute vastness of those places with visual elements alone. You can look at it, and it looks beautiful, but it's also spacious and terrifying. The sound is very expansive. You can hear people talking from so far away. A single duck flying over you has the loudest sound in its wings. I have it in me, because I was born and raised up there."

Drawing on her childhood on Nunavut's Victoria Island, and on her mother's memories of forced relocation from film's Northern Quebec location, Tagaq's sense of the sound of the Arctic spaces shown in the film transforms the images, adding great feeling and depth to what is a complex mix of beautiful representations and racially charged clichés. The film, the world's first major work of non-fiction filmmaking, is rife with contradictions: its director, Robert Flaherty, lived and worked with Inuit for years, yet still included staged scenes of buffoonery and feigned Inuit ignorance of modern accoutrements.

Nonetheless, Tagaq and Charke found much

PROGRAM NOTES CONTINUED

worthy of exploring in *Nanook*. Tagaq viewed the film, improvising two interlocking parts based on Inuit throat singing forms, which usually involve two vocalists. As she did, she experienced a wealth of emotions, from pride to delight to rage. "Initially I found it a hindrance to adhere to the visual element and not be totally free, but I like the dimension it gave me," Tagaq notes, "and the ability that I have to let the film be the film."

Charke left Tagaq's recorded vocals intact, weaving in sounds he collected during stays in the Arctic, as well as using subtle processing to enhance certain moments in Tagaq's voice. Live, Tagaq adds yet another swath of sound, reacting once again to the images and music laid down with

Charke. The layers that form the soundscape echo the layers of meaning that can be drawn from the film itself, from its gorgeous scenes of a very different Arctic a century ago, and from its failings, when it devolves into harsh stereotype. "Everyone will take what they want from it. I have no intention of spoon-feeding people what they need to know," Tagaq states. "Yet, hopefully, via coaxing and innuendo and emotion, I can elevate people's consciousness of Inuit culture, and of culture in general. I can take a small bite out of the underground racism against Inuit and Aboriginal people. I have faith that if people are educated about what's actually happening, and if people believe, it can be fixed. But you have to acknowledge the bad to sprout the good."

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Tanya Tagaq vocals released her debut CD *Sinaa* (meaning "edge" in her ancestral language of Inuktitut) in 2005. The Nunavut-born singer has not just attracted the attention of some of the world's most groundbreaking artists, they have invited her to participate on their own musical projects, not just singularly, but repeatedly. Tagaq recorded with Björk on the soundtrack for the Matthew Barney film *Drawing Restraint 9*, Björk's 2004 CD *Medúlla* and on her Vespertine tour. In 2005, another monumental collaborative project came to fruition when the Kronos Quartet invited Tanya to participate on a project aptly titled *Nunavut*, which has been performed at select venues across North America, from its January 2006 debut at the Chan Centre in Vancouver, BC through to New York's Carnegie Hall. Acclaim and respect has followed Tagaq on her solo ventures as well: both *Sinaa* and *Auk/ Blood* were nominated for a Juno Award (best Aboriginal recording) and (best instrumental recording). Both recordings won in several categories at the Canadian Aboriginal Music Awards, including best female artist. Tagaq's stunning video *Tungijjuq*, on which she

collaborated with Jesse Zubot and Montreal filmmakers Felix Lajeunesse and Paul Raphael, premiered at the 2009 Toronto International Film Festival and the 2010 Sundance Film Festival. In 2009 she also narrated and provided music for the National Film Board documentary, *This Land*.

The innovation on her album, *Animism*, seamlessly uses the technology of the digital recording studio to make an encyclopedic argument for the natural world. *Animism* has received major critical praise and attention in Canada. The album won the 2014 Polaris Music Prize, a prestigious annual award (based on the UK's Mercury Prize) that judges albums based on the highest artistic integrity, without regard to musical genre, professional affiliation, or sales history. This is Tagaq's first engagement at the Hopkins Center.

Jean Martin drums is an award-winning musician and producer. Along with recording over ten albums with artists such as Juno award winner DD Jackson and Chelsea Bridge, the drummer has put in his time on the road, picking up awards along

ABOUT THE ARTISTS CONTINUED

the way (Freddy Stone Award for leadership and excellence, National Jazz Awards Best Drummer nomination). Martin has extensively toured Canadian jazz festivals, the United States (Fez Jazz Club in New York, Washington DC Jazz Fest) as well as international locations such as Molda, Maubeuge and Rouen International Jazz Festivals.

Martin has appeared on the TFO and Bravo TV jazz special *Duos* where he performed improvisations with National Jazz Awards winner Kevin Turcotte and participated in a Jazz Opera performed at the 10th Annual Jazz Festival in Guelph, Ontario. He currently plays with groups Barnyard Drama, Idiolalla, Laconnor, Jean Martin Trio and now Tanya Tagaq.

Jesse Zubot violin is a founding member of the acoustic-roots ensemble Zubot & Dawson. Zubot is also a member of the Great Uncles of the Revolution, which includes well-known Toronto bassist Andrew Downing and trumpeter Kevin Turcotte. Both of these recording acts are Juno Award winners. Recently, he has delved heavily into the world of creative and improvised music. In the past few years he has performed and recorded with the likes of Eugene Chadbourne, Evan Parker, Secret Mommy, Torsten Muller, Dave Douglas, Peggy Lee, Orkestra Rova, Fred Frith, Nels Cline, Henry Kaiser and Tanya Tagaq. In 2005, Zubot launched a new label, Drip Audio.

CONNECTING ARTISTS TO THE COMMUNITY

While at Dartmouth, Tanya Tagaq visited classes in Music, Film and Media Studies, Anthropology, and Native American Studies; joined students for discussions and dinners in residence halls; met with graduate students in IGERT program; and participates in a post-performance discussion. For more information on Hop Outreach & Arts Education, call 603.646.2010 or visit hop.dartmouth.edu/online/outreach.

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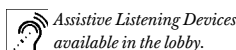
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