

Theatre reviews

An evening of music, dance, and storytelling

Sarah Gignac
OF THEATRE CRITIC

Confessions of an Indian Cowboy
The Roundhouse Community
Centre
Until January 27

Full Circle: First Nations Performance presents Margo Kane's *Confessions of an Indian Cowboy* at the Roundhouse Community Centre. It is a one-woman play that explores the lives and culture of 'Indians' and 'Cowboys' through storytelling, song, and dance.

Kane portrays several different characters: an old woman explaining the misconceptions of being an Indian, a little girl dreaming of being a cowboy and training her first pony, a child telling the story of how her cowboy father and a Native mother met at a dance in the Royal Hotel, and many more.

Kane transforms from character to character with the aid of a few simple costume pieces and some impressive physical transformations. Her mannerisms and vocals change effortlessly from the shuffling rambles of an old woman to the rambunctious prattle of a child to the suave moves of a cowboy. She describes her surroundings with such clarity, creating vivid images of lush meadows, flowing rivers, even terrible storms.

While the characters and images are wonderful, *Confessions of an Indian Cowboy* lacks a cohesiveness that would make it fully engaging. There are scenes where Kane is switching between a few characters very quickly. It is difficult to follow who is who, and the story gets lost in the confusion. Also, during the last half-hour Kane presents many images that are hard to link together. The story starts to drag, and loses the audience's attention.

Making up for any shortcomings in the script is the original

score played live by three extremely talented musicians. Fiddler Doug Thordarson, guitarist Barrie Nighswander, and percussion wizard Joseph Danza not only provide a lively soundtrack to the play, they use their instruments to create the sounds of a babbling brook, the chatter of a forest, a raging tempest. They even fill in small sound cues like a cowboy's whistle, the clopping of horse hooves, and a ringing phone. The musicians fill in the gaps and round out *Confessions of an Indian Cowboy* perfectly.

Topped with cabaret style seating and line dancing lessons at the intermission (yes, this reviewer shook her uncoordinated booty), *Confessions of an Indian Cowboy* is, overall, a fun evening of music, dance, and storytelling.

Confessions of an Indian Cowboy plays at The Roundhouse Theatre until January 27. For ticket information call (604) 689-0926.

