

PRESS KIT



THIS IS NOT A CEREMONY

Ahnahtsipiitaa (Colin Van Loon)

2022 | 20 min 56 s

VR Film

English, Blackfoot with English subtitles



Selections and Awards



Synopsis

Niitsitapi writer and director Ahnahktsipiitaa (Colin Van Loon) takes us beyond the veil of traditional media and transports us directly into another realm, where past, present and future are one; where colonial rules and assumptions are forgotten; and where we can finally get to the truth of the matter.

Presented in stunning cinematic VR, the narrative unfolds all around us, on a dream-like plane of existence. Panoramas flow and merge, stories come to life and dance before our eyes, and community protocols confront our notions of personal responsibility. Here, we are asked to witness some of the darker sides of living life in Canada while Indigenous.

This unforgettable experience will stay with you long after it's over. **THIS IS NOT A CEREMONY** calls on all who've watched to take action, to share what they have seen and heard, to learn from these tragedies and never forget—so that they will never happen again.

Long Synopsis

Niitsitapi writer and director Ahnahktsipiitaa (Colin Van Loon) takes us beyond the veil of traditional media and transports us directly into another realm, where past, present and future are one; where colonial rules and assumptions are forgotten; and where we can finally get to the truth of the matter.

In this stunning, cinematic VR experience, we're invited to watch as the narrative unfolds all around us, on a dream-like plane of existence where spirits and time flow and merge, and stories come to life and dance before our eyes. Inside this immersive virtual world, two Indigenous trickster poets in mirrored red suits and long braids guide us on a journey, in which community protocols confront our notions of personal responsibility. The pair's sharp wit and caustic humour will be familiar to anyone who has spent time in First Nation communities, and their comradery keeps us at ease as we explore some of the darker sides of living life in Canada while Indigenous.

Matriarchs and *Inii* (buffalo) rule this virtual realm. They pull no punches, yet they lead us with kindness, bringing us face-to-face with some of the grim realities Indigenous Peoples have experienced. We explore the stories of two Indigenous men wounded by the colonial tradition of systemic racism. These stories disrupt the status quo, laying bare the benign cruelty of colonial oppression, and dare to ask, "Now that you know, just what are you going to do about it?"

This unforgettable experience will stay with you long after it's over. Challenging us to act on what we've learned, **THIS IS NOT A CEREMONY** calls on all who've watched to bear witness and share what they've seen and heard, to learn from these tragedies—and to never forget.

Team

Ahnahktsipiitaa (Colin Van Loon)

Director



Photo : Luis Alvarez

Filmmaker Ahnahktsipiitaa is Blackfoot and Dutch, originally hailing from The Piikani Nation. During his upbringing he resided alongside his mother in Lethbridge and many other dusty Southern Alberta towns. Currently, Ahnahktsipiitaa is the Operations Manager for the Indigenous Matriarchs 4 AR/VR media lab (IM4-Lab). Ahnahktsipiitaa sits on Telefilm Indigenous Working Group, among others. Community centred, he aims to elevate the voices and stories of Indigenous peoples, whether creating spaces for youth works in the Talking Stick's Festivals REEL Reservation: Indigenous Cinematic Indigenous Sovereignty Series or through his company Blackfoot Nation Films.

Jessica Dymond

Editor



Photo : Celeste Makow

Jessica has over 10 years of experience working in media arts. Her work as an editor ranges from experimental documentaries to factual television series, to narrative film, and has been shown at festivals including Hot Docs, imagineNATIVE Film + Media Arts Festival, DOXA, LA Skins Fest, and The Banff Mountain Film Festival, among others. Jessica holds a Master of Fine Arts in Documentary Media from X University (formerly known as Ryerson University), as well as a Graduate Diploma in Communications from Concordia University, and a Bachelor of Arts from McGill University. After graduate school, she completed a video editing practicum at The Banff Centre. In 2017 she was a participant in Whistler Film Festival's DOC LAB program.

James Monkman

Art Director, Visual Effects

Photo : Ryan Lebel



James Monkman is a Cree visual artist and art director residing in Toronto, Ontario with his wife and children. Growing up in Winnipeg, Manitoba, James, often, found himself operating in two cultures, simultaneously: Western and Indigenous. In each piece he creates, he brings an Indigenous process and perspective that remains an important point of emphasis. James' work is diverse and covers a breadth of digital and tactile mediums where he explores concepts in traditional Indigenous thought, language, and cosmology in his pursuit of an aesthetic with an eye towards Indigenous futurism. The goal of this unique perspective illustrates how imperative the Indigenous perspective is in our rapidly evolving North American culture.

Nagamo Publishing

Music and Sound Design



Created out of a need to provide an access point for authentic Indigenous production music, Nagamo has been filling a void since it's launch in 2019. With a network of composers ranging from First Nations, Metis and Inuit, Nagamo provides premium production music created by Indigenous composers. With most of Canada represented, Nagamo has begun expanding this network into the rest of Turtle Island, with a larger vision for a global Indigenous production music network. Nagamo offers custom compositions as well as a diverse catalogue of music for license. Their catalog ranges from subtle underscore and tension cues, to high-energy pop productions and everything in between to bring the picture to life and provide an authentic and quality score.

Dana Dansereau

Producer

Photo : Emily Cooper

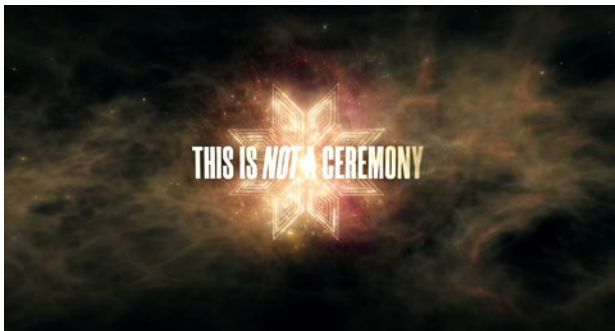


Dana Dansereau has been a Producer at the National Film Board of Canada's Digital Studio for 10 years. He oversees the production and ideation of many of its core projects including Canadian Screen Award winning **Gymnasia** - the first full immersive 360 stop motion VR animation. Following its Tribeca Film Festival debut, **Gymnasia** has been shown across Canada and the globe. He also produced CSA winning VR experience **Biidaaban: First Light**, the Webby Award winning short video **OK Google** and the genre defining interactive documentary, **Bear 71**. His years of experience as a creative technologist in the advertising industry combined with his artistic background make his expertise invaluable in creating world leading interactive experiences.

Gallery



Teaser



Credits

WRITTEN AND DIRECTED BY

Ahnahtsipiitaa (Colin Van Loon)

PRODUCED BY

the National Film Board of Canada

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH

imagineNATIVE Film + Media Arts Festival

FEATURING

**Adam North Peigan
Robert Sinclair**

POETS

**Taran Kootenhayoo
Tawahum Bige**

MATRIARCH GUIDE

Lillian Howard

DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY

Olivier Leroux

EDITOR

Jessica Dymond

ART DIRECTOR

James Monkman

SOUND DESIGN & MIXING

Nagamo Publishing

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

Rob Guthrie

PRODUCTION DESIGNER

Sean McQuillan

LOCATION SCOUTS

**Michelle Bond (BC)
Quentin Johnston (Alberta)**

FEATURED CAST

**Brian Sinclair - David Lyle
Nurse - Marlies Dubois
Orderly - Arvind Johal
Security Guard - Otto Szabo
Social Worker - Michele Wienecke
Young Adam - Alexander Eagletail**

BACKGROUND PERFORMERS

**Jamie Crozier
Donna Kodama
Leanna Nash
Mustafa Yilmaz
Montana Oglesby**

BLACKFOOT VOICEOVER AND TRANSLATION

Dr. Eldon Yellowhorn

PORTRAIT PHOTOGRAPHY BY

**Alanna Blackrider-Onespot
Portrait Subjects
Adonis ManyChief
Zane Severite-ManyChief
Adonis Zaharjko
Billy Twigg
Leonard Little Mustache Jr.**

Dakota Big Tobacco

Draytin Morden

Justin Meguire

Donald Saddleback

Everett Wolfetail

Jonathan Brewer

Brody Bad Eagle

Nathan Avery

Herb Wilson

Kobe Alexander James Morning Bull

Dwayne Delaney

Brayson Breaker

Liam Breaker

Keeran Yellow Horn

Jayden Doore

Earnest Poundmaker

Montana Tyrell Redcalf

Danzel Ear

George Goodstriker

Daniel Pard

Tristen Beebe

Bobby Currie

Joseph Rex Across the Mountain

George Van Loon

James Across the Mountain

GAFFER

Cameron Watts

GRIP

Torin Greyeyes-Starblanket

SOUND RECORDISTS

**Tyler Lucas (BC)
Zack May (Alberta)**

WARDROBE

Carmen Thompson

WARDROBE ASSISTANTS

**Karuna Breeze Dampsy
Emmy Routledge**

HAIR AND MAKEUP

**Keesha Dawson-Harrison (BC)
Min Jee Mowat (BC)
Chenise Soosay (Alberta)**

SET PHOTOGRAPHY

**Soloman Chiniquay (BC)
Alanna Blackrider-Onespot (Alberta)**

DATA WRANGLERS

**Odessa Shuquaya (BC)
Adam Solway (Alberta)**

PROPERTY BUYER

Heather McQuillan

COMMUNITY LIAISON

Tawnya Plain Eagle

PRODUCTION ASSISTANTS

**Dustin McGladrey (BC)
Richard Wilson (BC)
Charlene Parsons (BC)
Kahka-Naikitstakii Crop Eared Wolf (Alberta)**

ASSISTANT EDITOR

Michael Morin

3D ANIMATOR

**Brian Vowles
Kodai Yanagawa**

FRENCH TRANSLATION

Gabrielle Lisa Collard

CRAFT SERVICES
Salishan Catering

NATIONAL FILM BOARD OF CANADA

PRODUCER
Dana Dansereau

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER
Robert McLaughlin

PROJECT MANAGER
Laura Mitchell

SENIOR PRODUCTION COORDINATOR
Jasmine Pullukat

CREATIVE TECHNOLOGIST
Vincent McCurley

STUDIO OPERATIONS MANAGERS
Camille Fillion
Janine Steele

STUDIO ADMINISTRATORS
Victoria Angell
Carla Jones

MARKETING MANAGER
Tammy Peddle

MARKETING COORDINATOR
Eric Bondo

SOCIAL MEDIA STRATEGIST
Hannah Martin

EDUCATION MARKETING STRATEGIST
Anne Kazume

PUBLICIST
Jennifer Mair
Katja De Bock

LEGAL COUNSEL
Christian Pitchen

IMAGINENATIVE FILM + MEDIA ARTS FESTIVAL

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
Naomi Johnson

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
Jason Ryle

INSTITUTE DIRECTOR
Daniel Northway-Frank

About the NFB

The National Film Board of Canada (NFB) is one of the world's leading digital content hubs, creating groundbreaking interactive documentaries and animation, mobile content, installations and participatory experiences. NFB interactive productions and digital platforms have won over 100 awards, including 21 Webbys. To access this unique content, visit NFB.ca.

Electronic Documents

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Including promotional materials

mediaspace.nfb.ca/epk/this-is-not-a-ceremony

