

INTRODUCING OUR FREE EVENT

CITY TREATY

in St. Catharines

OPENING NIGHT September 19th



Dear friends,

We are St. Catharines' newly formed Indigenous Theatre Collective and partners, and we want to invite you to come celebrate with us at the opening of the new Brock University Marilyn I. Walker theatre and arts building downtown September 19 and 20. Please, support our event to honour the land and open the doors to all peoples.

Along with dance demonstrations, music by Perpetual Peace Project, vendors, workshops, and a talk about the land by renowned historian Rick Hill, we are preparing two stagings of *City Treaty*, the award winning poem by Marvin Francis (Heart Lake Nation, N. Alberta). John K. Sampson described it in the *Globe and Mail* as: "Everything a great poem should be--nasty, rude, sneaky, cranky, smart, truthful and intelligent"-- so hold on to your hats for a zany look at cities and treaties from an Indigenous perspective.

In this newsletter you will find information about Marvin Francis and a poster for *City Treaty* that we hope you will print and display, and forward on to all your contacts. You, our friends, are our best marketing support and we appreciate whatever you can do to help us broadcast this free event to our community.

Thank you,

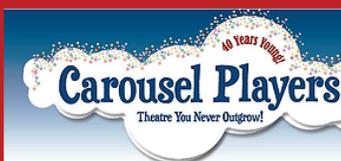
your City Treaty partners

Marilyn I. Walker
School of Fine &
Performing Arts

Brock University
Faculty of Humanities

Brock
University

Aboriginal Student
Services



CITY TREATY

All are welcome to come join our free weekend event! A gathering of local and provincial Indigenous Artists to open the Marilyn I. Walker School of Fine and Performing Arts Building. Featuring a stage adaptation of Marvin Francis' epic long poem *City Treaty*, art by multi-disciplinary artist Shelly Niro, a historical talk with Rick Hill, workshops, dance demonstrations, music, food and more. The event wishes to honour the land the new theatre is built upon and open its doors to all peoples.

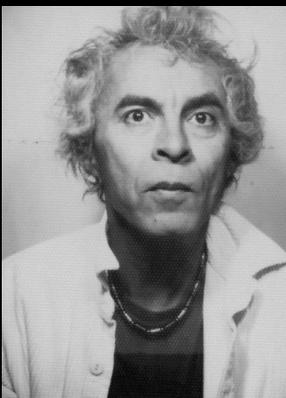
Saturday, September 19

- 5:00 pm Opening Ceremony
- 5:30 pm Dance, Drumming & Vendor Fair
- 6:30 pm Historical Talk with Rick Hill
- 7:00 pm *City Treaty* presentation

Sunday, September 20

- 12:30 pm Perpetual Peace Project Concert
- 2:00 pm *City Treaty* presentation
- 3:00 pm Workshops
- 5:00 pm Closing Ceremony
- 5:30 pm Rise Above Hospitality

MARVIN FRANCIS



Marvin Francis was an Aboriginal poet, playwright, author and visual artist based in Winnipeg. With his 2002 book, *City Treaty*, he established himself as a unique voice in the Manitoba arts scene, one that was abruptly silenced by his death in January 2005 from cancer at the age of 49.

Born and raised on the Heart Lake First Nation reserve in Northern Alberta in 1955, Francis began his working life after quitting school in 1971. He spent much of the following decade traveling across the route of the Trans Canada Highway doing odd jobs. Arriving in Winnipeg in the late 1980s, he studied at the University of Winnipeg and University of Manitoba, where he earned B.A. and M.A. degrees. *City Treaty*, earned him considerable acclaim and in 2003 he received the John

Hirsch Award as Manitoba's most promising writer.

Reasons behind his railings against cultural assimilation and dominant society are evident in his 2004 contribution to Canadian Dimension magazine, where he identifies as “part of the massive migration of Aboriginal peoples to the city. I was raised by a single mother who moved us to Edmonton (and many other places) from the Heart Lake First Nation in Alberta to avoid residential school for my siblings and me.”

The “urban rez” became his life and his first city experiences “loaded with culture shock, mostly negative, with the in-your-face racism of the seventies” overwhelmed him. But Francis had energy and expansive artistic horizons. He wrote and/or directed radio plays for the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, such as *The Sniffer* and *Punching Out Judy*, that reflected his unique perspective on Manitoba urban life. Francis also expanded into writing short stories (such as “Pencil Beauty” in the 2005 Manitoba Aboriginal Writers Collective anthology *Bone Memory*), designing visual art and creating virtual Internet exhibits. He was also active politically within the arts community of Manitoba. A founding member of the Manitoba Aboriginal Writers Collective, he was also a board member of the Urban Shaman art gallery and the Manitoba Writers Guild. In these areas as well as his art, he was a passionate supporter of Canadian Native people and the urban poor of Winnipeg.

“Ah, the ‘cigarette poet’,” began close friend and fellow poet Duncan Mercredi when asked to profile Francis. “He was always writing and if he ran out of paper, he’d break pieces off his constant companion, the cigarette pack, and scribble thoughts and ideas on these bits of paper. Some contained a full piece, short, but full of meaning; others were the start of something amazing.”

“He was always working on so many projects,” said Jamis Paulson of Turnstone Press, publisher of *City Treaty* and *bush camp*, Francis’s second book of poetry published posthumously in 2008. “He had this idea to install a poem without end that would run along the underground circular concourse here in Winnipeg. Wherever you entered you could read the poem. Today with LCD technology someone could string up monitors in a circle to make it happen, but back in 2000 when he

was talking about it, it was radical. Brilliant. He could say 'hey, pay attention to this (social issue)' all the while using so much humour "that it was fun to listen to him."

Thanks to WindSpeaker for this article about Marvin Francis. To see more [click here](#).

**For more information visit our website at
indigenoustheatrec.wix.com/citytreaty
and subscribe to our newsletter!**

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