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News Release

NATIONAL ARTS CENTRE APPOINTS LORI MARCHAND AS THE FIRST MANAGING DIRECTOR OF INDIGENOUS THEATRE

December 13, 2017 – OTTAWA (Canada) – The National Arts Centre (NAC) is very pleased to announce that Lori Marchand, the longstanding, highly-respected Executive Director of Western Canada Theatre in Kamloops, British Columbia will be the first Managing Director of Indigenous Theatre at the National Arts Centre. She will take up her post in April 2018.

Ms. Marchand has extensive experience in building and strengthening artistic organizations. In her new position, she will work collaboratively with the NAC's newly-appointed Artistic Director of Indigenous Theatre, Kevin Loring. Together they will build the new Indigenous Theatre, which will open during the 2019-2020 season to mark the NAC's 50th Anniversary.

"We are proud of Lori Marchand's deep experience in creating and supporting Indigenous art and artists. We know that she and Kevin Loring will make history when they open the NAC's Indigenous Theatre," said Peter Herrndorf, President and CEO of the National Arts Centre. "Her work across the country and particularly in Western Canada will be of great benefit to the NAC as she builds the team to make this groundbreaking theatre a reality."

Ms. Marchand grew up in Ottawa and saw her first play at the NAC as a child. Her father, Len Marchand Sr., was the first Indigenous Member of Parliament to be elected to and take a seat in the House of Commons in 1968 from the riding of Kamloops-Cariboo.

"Returning to Ottawa is like an artistic homecoming," said Ms. Marchand. "I am inspired by and hopeful for the future of Indigenous people in Canada. For the NAC to make the historic commitment to build a theatre for Indigenous voices and expression is a significant step towards this future. It's an inspirational challenge and a daunting challenge, and I am honoured to take it on. My father visited the NAC when it first opened in 1969 to see the production of *The Ecstasy of Rita Joe*, where he met and befriended one of the play's lead actors August Schellenberg. They were both trailblazers in their respective professions. Now, nearly 50 years later, Kevin Loring and I are following their trail and building a permanent home for Indigenous artists at the NAC. It is the most exciting professional challenge of my life."

In 2009, Ms. Marchand worked with both Mr. Schellenberg and Mr. Loring on a new production of *The Ecstasy of Rita Joe*, a joint production between Western Canada Theatre and the NAC, to mark the NAC's 40th anniversary. In many ways, the production began a new relationship between Ms. Marchand, Mr. Loring and the NAC, and it initiated the exploration and conversation that ultimately resulted in the Indigenous Theatre at the NAC.

Ms. Marchand is of the Syilx Nation and grew up in Algonquin and Secwepemc Territory, lived and worked in Ojibwa and Cree Territory, and worked with leaders from the Six Nations, the Métis and the Mohawk. Her family environment brought her into contact with Indigenous leaders from Canada and around the world.

Ms. Marchand has served as the Executive Director of Western Canada Theatre for 18 years, working with four artistic directors to create and implement a compelling vision that has led to significant and successful growth. Ms. Marchand has also served as a member of the B.C. Arts Council and currently serves as its Vice-Chair.

ABOUT THE NAC

The National Arts Centre (NAC) is the only bilingual, multi-disciplinary performing arts centre in Canada and one of the largest in the world. The NAC presents 1,300 performances a year in Music, Dance, Theatre, and Contemporary Music. The NAC's mandate is to work with artists and arts organizations across the country to support the performing arts everywhere and to create a national stage.

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