

TANYA TAGAQ

IN CONCERT WITH
NANOOK OF THE NORTH

Thursday, February 16, 2017, 7:30 pm
Strauss Hall



Photo: Nadya Kwandibens

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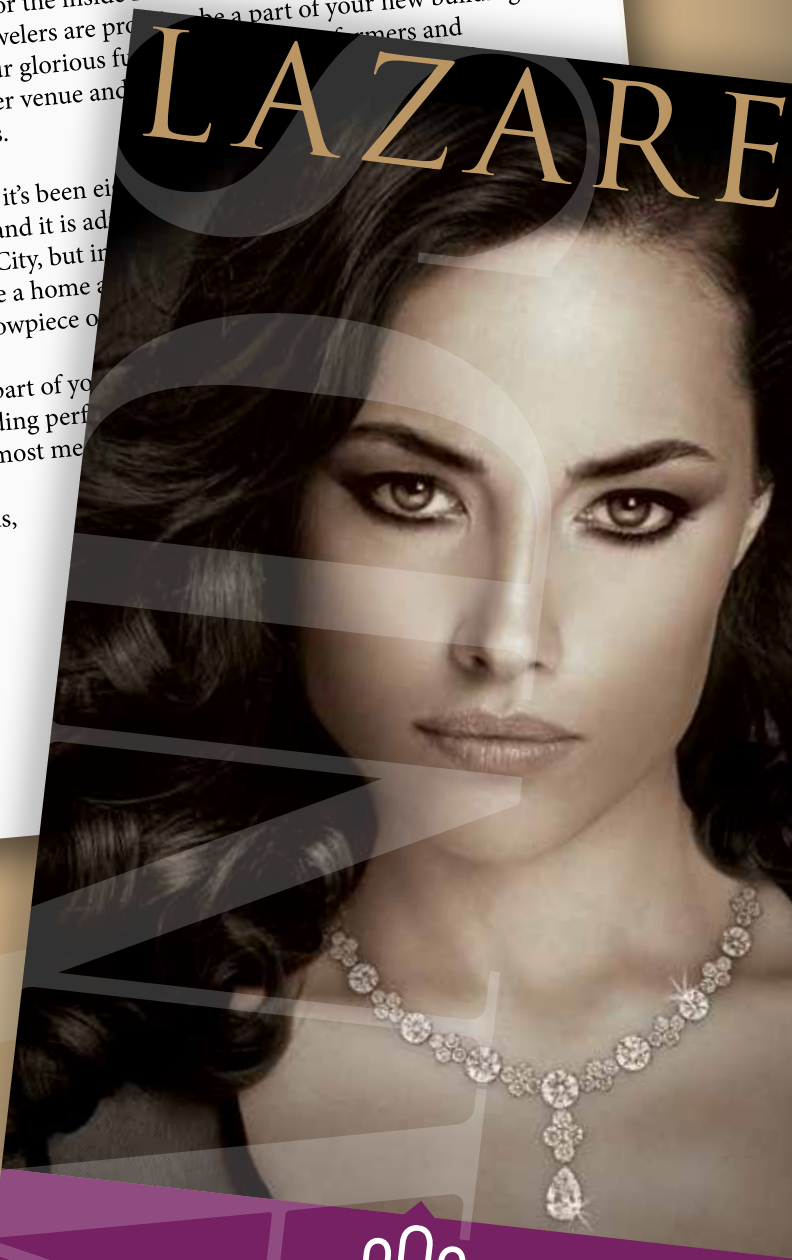
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TANYA TAGAQ

IN CONCERT WITH *NANOOK OF THE NORTH*

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 Peoples Cinema: 1500 Nations, One Tradition*.

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

tanyatagaq.com

Exclusive management for Tanya Tagaq: Helen Britton, Six Shooter Records
sixshooterrecords.com

Exclusive U.S. representation: Sue Bernstein, Bernstein Artists, Inc.
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ABOUT THE ARTIST

Tanya Tagaq's music is like nothing you've heard before. The Arctic-born artist is an improvisational performer, avant-garde composer and experimental recording artist who won the 2014 Polaris Music Prize for an album called *Animism*, a work that disrupted the music world in Canada and beyond with its powerfully original vision. Tagaq contorts elements of punk, metal, and electronica into a complex and contemporary sound that begins in breath, a communal and fundamental phenomenon.

While 2014's Polaris Music Prize win signaled an awakening to Tanya Tagaq's art and messages, she has been touring and collaborating with an elite international circle of artists for over a decade. Tagaq's improvisational approach lends itself to collaboration across genres, and recent projects have pulled her in vastly different directions, from contributing guest vocals to a recent F**ked Up song (a hardcore punk band from Toronto) to premiering a new composition made for Kronos Quartet's *Fifty for the Future* collection.

Tanya Tagaq's music and performances challenge static ideas of genre and culture, and contend with themes of environmentalism, human rights and post-colonial issues. In repeated interviews, Tagaq has stressed the importance of considering her work in the context of contemporary—not traditional—art. This statement is not just about sound, although her music is decidedly modern and technically intricate, but about deep-rooted assumptions about indigenous culture in general.

Beyond her work as a recording artist and composer, one of Tagaq's most celebrated projects is the *Nanook of the North* show, in which Tagaq reclaims the controversial 1922 silent film of the same title. The film is considered the world's first major work of non-fiction filmmaking, even though the piece is rife with contradictions and incorrect assumptions about Inuit life that persist to this day. The film portrays the lives of an Inuk family in Arctic Canada. Its director, Robert Flaherty, lived and worked with Inuit for years, but still included staged scenes of buffoonery and feigned Inuit ignorance of modern accoutrements.

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. Drawing on her childhood on Nunavut's Victoria Island, and on her mother's memories of forced relocation from the film's Northern Quebec location, Tagaq's sense of the sound of the Arctic spaces shown in the film transforms the images, adding tremendous feeling and depth to what is a complex mix of beautiful representations and racially charged clichés.

Tagaq's exquisite improvisations and expression ferociously refute easy (or lazy) assumptions about contemporary Indigenous art's relationship to tradition, a style she has perfected over a decade of performances on major stages worldwide.

Tanya Tagaq in concert with *Nanook of the North* was commissioned by the Toronto International Film Festival, where it premiered to critical acclaim

in 2012 as part of TIFF First Nations. Since then, she has performed unique iterations of the *Nanook of the North* show to audiences at Lincoln Center, at Mondavi Center (San Francisco), Luminato (Toronto), PUSH International Film Festival (Vancouver), and Helsinki Festival, to name a few.

Tanya Tagaq's recent release, *Retribution*, has been receiving accolades from critics and audiences around the world.

Photo: Nadya Kwandibens





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Photo: John Coyne

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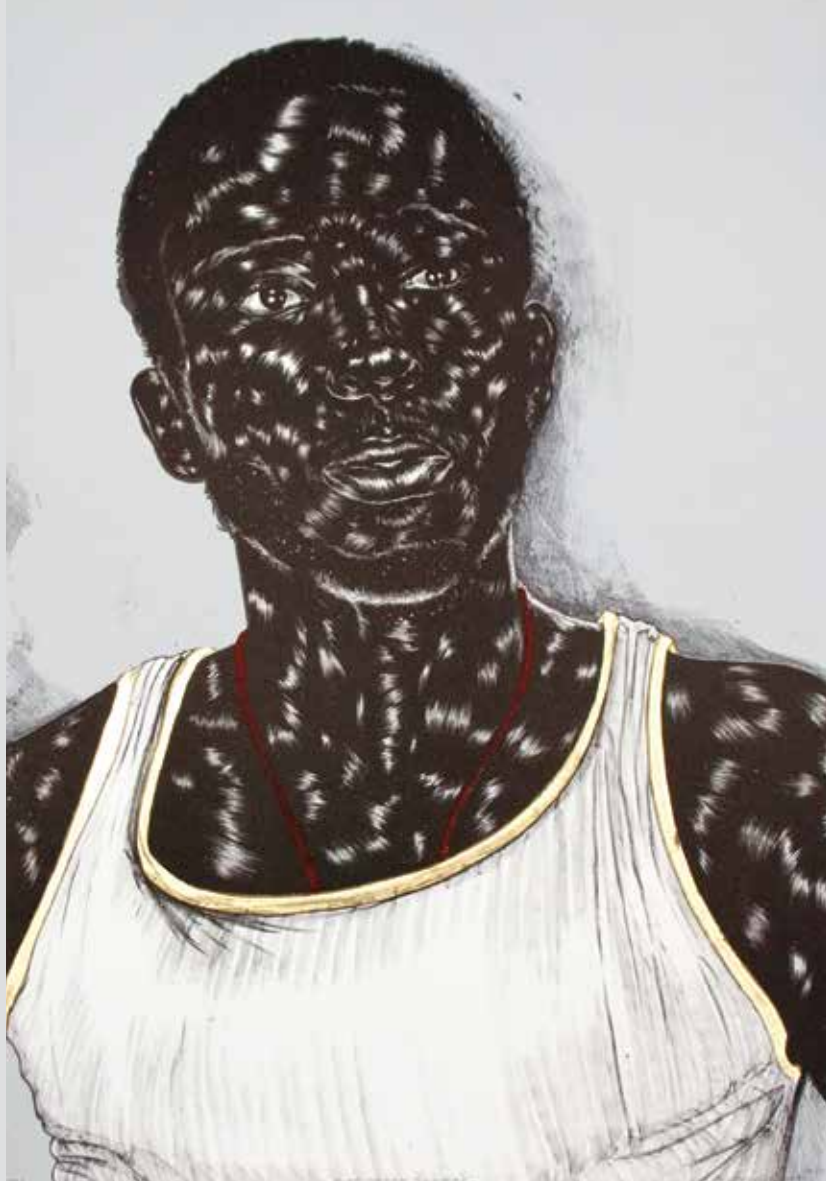
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Funding for this exhibition was provided in part by the Richard V.M. Corton, M.D., and Janet Y. Corton Exhibition Fund, the John S. and Patricia C. Koza Art Exhibition Fund, and the UIMA Members Special Exhibition Fund.

Toyin Ojih Odutola
(American, born in Nigeria, 1985–)
Birmingham (middle), 2014
Four-color lithograph with gold leaf
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