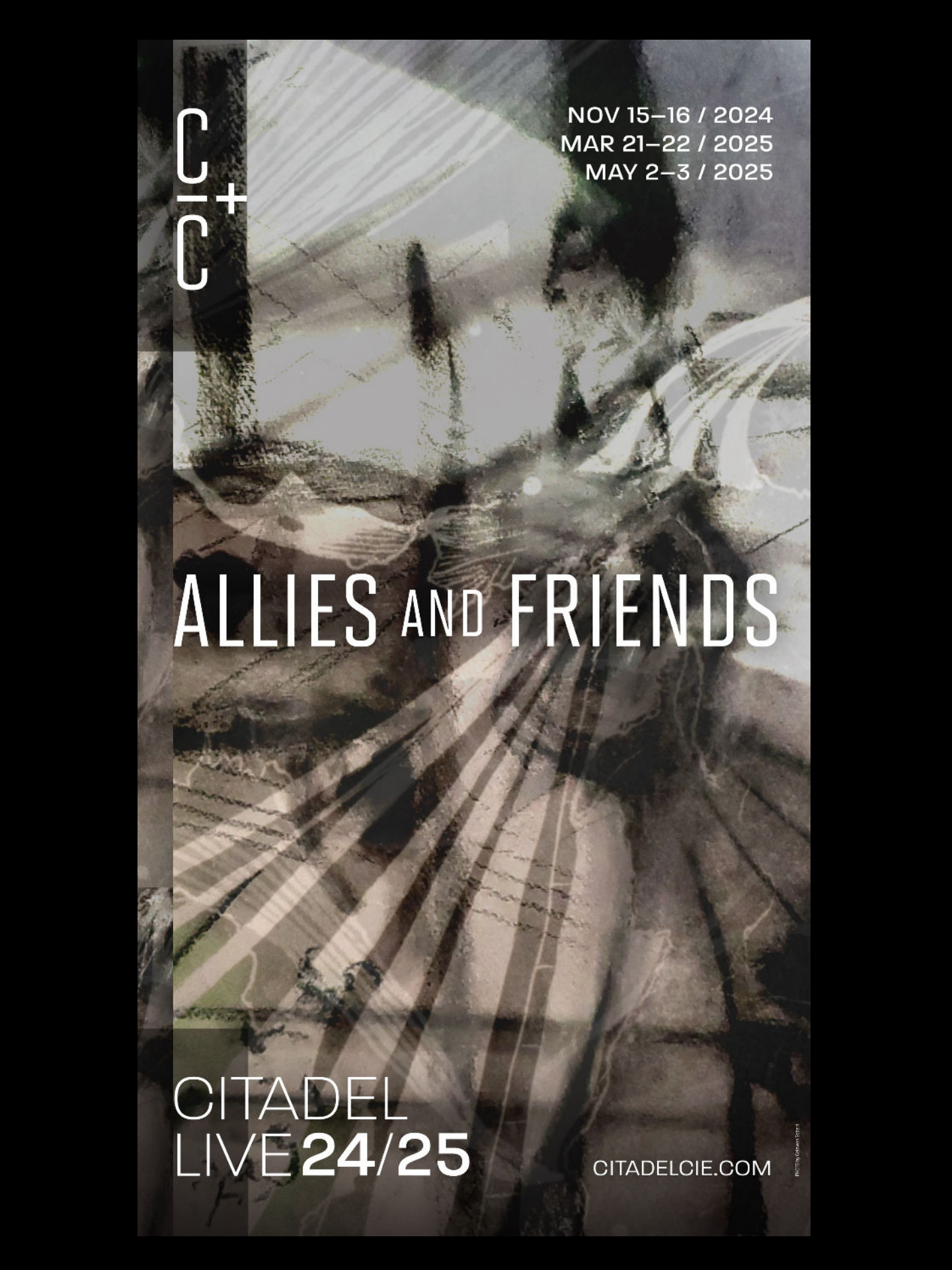




C+
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NOV 15–16 / 2024
MAR 21–22 / 2025
MAY 2–3 / 2025

ALLIES AND FRIENDS

CITADEL
LIVE **24/25**

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PHOTOGRAPHY BY JEFFREY M. HARRIS

CITADEL+COMPAGNIE

wind in the leaves collective presents

allies and friends

November 15+16, 2024 | 8pm | The Citadel: Ross Centre for Dance

Treading “Same Same But Different” (Excerpt)

Choreographers and Performers: MC² (Cheryl Chan and Michael Mortley)

Spoken Word Artist and Performer: Shelly Ann McLeod

WILD RIVER FREEZE-UP

Choreographer: B. Solomon with Colin Cudmore

Performers: B. Solomon, Colin Cudmore

-15-minute intermission -

rumi roaming: between shadow and light

Choreographer and Performer: Meryem Alaoui

Poet: charles c. smith

Audience Warning – this production contains haze and loud noises.

Running time approximately 1 hour 30 mins

wind in the leaves collective

Artistic Director: charles c. smith

Project Coordinator: Jillia Cato

Social Media Coordinator: Claire Whitaker

allies and friends

Production Stage Manager: Sharon DiGenova

Lighting Designer: Elijah Stefura

Stage Manager (Nov 16): Zoë Carpenter

Greetings

dear friends, colleagues, fellow artists, the interested and the curious, as artistic director of the wind in the leaves collective, i'm honoured to share with you our first of three programs we're presenting in collaboration with Citadel + Compagnie this season. for the collective, working in collaboration is core to our being and we're grateful that this program is co-sponsored as part of the Citadel LIVE 2024-2025 season.

encouraged by our previous seasons, this season is curated to showcase a mix of IBPOC artists from IBPOC working in diverse aesthetic practices.

the collective works with others to perform work that involves dance/poetry. in working out of the Citadel, we are establishing a venue for this genre and building interest amongst artists for similar performances. we see this as a way to engage IBPOC artists as foundational to this project and to engage artists from non-equity groups in sharing across the borders of identities - race, gender, sexual orientation, indigeneity, and disabilities.

to do this, we collaborate with artists who see their work involved in transformative social change. this allows the collective to deepen our own practice of connecting dance with poetry and connecting with artists who work in this space. For this season opening, we're honoured to present:

Treading "Same Same But Different" (MC² - Cheryl Chan and Michael Mortley with Shelly Ann McLeod) is about how people deal with the same situations differently. We all go through similar moments in life, whether it be the way that we ride transit, how we walk down the street, tackle hardships or how we even express the same emotions simultaneously. How we, as unique individuals, process; cope; and navigate through the same situation individually or concurrently that make the journey extraordinary in and of itself. Just like waves crashing against the seashore, watching the journey of two different people face the same situation, they are never the exact same.

WILD RIVER FREEZE-UP (B. Solomon with Colin Cudmore)

portals that pierce flesh where much blood has poured from
now rage with freezing cold water on the edge of expansion and explosion
here the stuckness gives way to rest
in this break we are finally freed from dreaming

rumi roaming: between shadow and light (Gita Hashemi and Meryem Alaoui based on the poetry by charles c. smith) this performance by the poet is in collaboration with dancer [Meryem Alaoui](#). This piece was originally directed by [Gita Hashemi](#), and the poetry and performance were commissioned and produced by SubversivePress for the multiplatform anthology [rumi roaming: contemporary engagements and interventions](#) forthcoming in 2025 as a co-publication of SubversivePress and Guernica World Editions), curated and edited by Gita Hashemi.

We're delighted you've joined us!!



Treading “Same Same But Different” (Excerpt)

Choreographers and Performers: MC² (Cheryl Chan and Michael Mortley)

Spoken Word Artist and Performer: Shelly Ann McLeod

Treading “Same Same But Different” is about how people deal with the same situations differently. We all go through similar moments in life, whether it be the way that we ride transit, how we walk down the street, tackle hardships or how we even express the same emotions simultaneously. How we, as unique individuals, process; cope; and navigate through the same situation individually or concurrently that make the journey extraordinary in and of itself. Just like waves crashing against the seashore, watching the journey of two different people face the same situation, they are never the exact same.

MC² was formed by Cheryl Chan and Michael Mortley. Cheryl has a background in Ballet, Modern, and Contemporary training and Michael has a background in Ballet, Modern, Indian Classical, and Folk dance, as well as being a multidisciplinary artist in the visual arts and photography. In 2019, they were introduced working on various other projects, but quickly began to develop an artistic connection through individual and collaborative improvisations. Through those improvisations, Michael and Cheryl conceptualized their first piece and presented their work in progress in 2022. They have continued to expand the creation to a full-length work with originally composed musical score.

WILD RIVER FREEZE-UP

Choreographer: B. Solomon with Colin Cudmore

Performers: B. Solomon, Colin Cudmore

portals that pierce flesh where much blood has poured from
now rage with freezing cold water on the edge of expansion and explosion
here the stuckness gives way to rest
in this break we are finally freed from dreaming

Program

rumi roaming: between shadow and light

Choreographer and Performer: Meryem Alaoui

Poet: charles c. smith

Original Director: Gita Hashemi

between shadow and light is part of the multi-platform (in print, and in virtual and real spaces), multi-disciplinary, and multi-language anthology *rumi roaming: contemporary engagements and interventions* (SubversivePress and Guernica World Edition, 2025), curated and edited by Gita Hashemi. *rumi roaming* juxtaposes new translations of some of Rumi's poems with creative non-fiction, poetry, scholarly essays, photo essays, and videos that engage with his work through decolonial reflections on language, human connections, place, and spirituality. Artists, poets, scholars, and thinkers from different disciplines and cultural backgrounds take off from Rumi's poetry to cover a wide range of interconnected and urgent themes, including global displacements and relations to land and water, translingual poetics and translation politics, indigenous language revitalization and diasporic language reclamation, and interrogations of spirituality, healing, and social justice. For more info about the anthology, to order online, and to access the project's public online archive, visit the website at rumiroaming.net.

MERYEM ALAOUI is a Toronto-based dancer and choreographer from Morocco. Founder and current co-artistic director of Jasad Dance Projects, her work is at the intersection of somatic research using movement and voice, and the exploration of contemporaneity through the reclamation of embodied performance practices, dances and knowledge from her culture as a Moroccan diasporic dance artist. A 2009 graduate of the School of Toronto Dance Theatre, she has danced for choreographers Amanda Acorn, Peggy Baker, Angela Blumberg, Antony Hamilton (with the company Dancemakers), Karen Kaeja (Kaeja d'Dance), among others. Her choreographic work has been presented nationally and internationally, notably in SummerWorks in Toronto, Tangente in Montreal and at the Théâtre National Mohammed V in Morocco. Meryem has received residency support nationally and internationally, and project funding from the Canada Council for the Arts, the Ontario and Toronto Arts Councils. She is a certified Body-Mind Centering® Somatic Movement Educator and has also been involved in community and arts-education projects such as with Arts Etobicoke, Haneen Women Choir, Dreamwalker Dance and The Arab Community Centre of Toronto.

www.jasad.ca

@meryem.alaoui.dance

@jasad.dance

CHERYL CHAN graduated from the GBC Dance Performance Studies Program and studied a year at The School of Toronto Dance Theatre. She has performed for Pan Am Games, Prologue, and festivals such as Nuit Blanche, SummerWorks, Luminato, Dance Ontario, Moving Inspiration Dance Festival (Winnipeg), and others. Cheryl has performed with companies such as Little Pear Garden Dance Company, The Chimera Project, The Parahumans, Impromptu Movements, and various independent artists as well. She has danced in short films and music videos like *The Grey*, *Wind Dancer*, and *Her & Her* which has been awarded at various film festivals. Cheryl is the Co-creator of MC² with Michael Mortley, with whom they have created their first work Treading "*Same, Same But Different*". She is in her eighth season with KasheDance, having toured multiple works throughout the Caribbean, Canada & USA, and is currently the Rehearsal Director for the company.

COLIN CUDMORE (he/him) is a Toronto-based percussionist and improviser. His fascination with the objects around him has led to some precarious musical moments, re-experiencing the childlike discovery of tossing things around and reveling in their new sonic capabilities. His antics have led to numerous improvised collaborations under the pseudonym %30%30, and solo performances as _53d8ZxP. He is one half of the electroacoustic duo Wilderness Adventure Ride with Owen Kurtz, and the completely acoustic percussion duo Why Be Normal with James Bailey. He finds joy in serving as a representative for the Ministry of Phonic Services, a community-driven music label and event organizer uplifting the local breadth of experimental music.

SHARON DIGENOVA is a Production Stage Manager and award-winning Lighting Designer, who began her career in a Broadway touring house in Massachusetts, where she worked in all aspects of technical theatre on numerous Tony Award winning productions. She has since been engaged in many capacities in a multitude of disciplines – designing for dance, theatre, multi-media, circus and even freak shows, and stage-managing music venues, producing dance, running her own venue, and touring internationally to over 350 cities (several times over) in more than 30 countries throughout North & South America, Europe, Australia, Asia and the Far East. She has collaborated with scores of National artists, companies and festivals ranging from The Royal Winnipeg Ballet, and Esmeralda Enrique Spanish Dance Co to Lua Shayenne Dance Co., and Canada's internationally acclaimed Holy Body Tattoo. She has also lit numerous international festivals and artists including the IABD (International Association of Blacks in Dance) Conference, The Toronto International Tap Festival, as well as Artists who include: multi award winning dancer Patricia Guerrero and Flamenco master, Joaquin Grilo.

GITA HASHEMI has been creating for over three decades in visual and performance art, digital and net art, and language-based art including live embodied writing, as well as in curation and publishing. Her multi-platform and transdisciplinary projects focus on marginalized narratives and their influence in historical and contemporary contexts. She is the curator and editor of the multiplatform anthology *rumi roaming: contemporary engagements and interventions* (forthcoming in 2025 from SubversivePress and Guernica World Editions).

Born on the beautiful twin islands of Trinidad and Tobago, **SHELLY ANN MC LEOD** began formal dance training at age 11 with Les Enfants Dance Company. She has traveled the Caribbean representing Trinidad and Tobago at various dance festivals where she was also invited to teach classes. She was awarded and accepted a scholarship from the University of the West Indies to read in the program of Dance and Dance Education in 2004. And again awarded and accepted another in 2006 from COBA Collective of Black Artists. She then took her pedagogy to Seneca College, York University Campus as Dance and Movement Professor in August 2016, and Movement Professor at Toronto Film School in January 2018. She is now the Dance and movement Educator at Emery Collegiate Institute. Shelly Ann is the founder and owner of Shhhhhh Designz Body Bar, a natural and Organic skincare line. Her aim is to educate about the importance of skincare using natural ingredients and to simply love and enjoy the skin you are in.

MICHAEL MORTLEY has been dancing for over 15 years with his training based in folk, contemporary and ballet. His secondary education was focused on Theatre Arts and dance. He has crafted his career with his certification over the past ten years with La Danse Caraibe performing and choreographing in Trinidad and Tobago. A graduate of the University of Trinidad and Tobago where he graduated with a BFA in Performing Arts with a specialization in dance. He has continued his explorations and training at Beijing Dance Academy obtaining a certificate in Chinese Contemporary dance. Michael is also a costume and lighting designer for Ronald Taylor Dance.

CHARLES C SMITH has written and edited sixteen books. he studied poetry with William Packard at New York University, edited three collections of poetry and his poetry has appeared in numerous journals and magazines, including Poetry Canada Review, the Quille and Quire, Descant, Dandelion, Fiddlehead. his recent books include: *travelogue of the bereaved* (2014), *whispers* (2014) *destination out* (2018) and *searching for eastman* (2021). *searching for eastman* had its world premiere at Canadian Stage in April 2024 and several of his other performances have been part of allies and friends. he is currently working on his next collection, *specimens*, which explores the connection between colonization and the emergence of botany, medical science experimentation on black bodies since slavery and the carving up of africa following the Berlin Conference of 1884-85.

Multi-award nominated, winner and loser, Artist **B. SOLOMON** (Anishinaabe niini / Irish settler) was born and raised on the land in Shebahonaning of the North Channel of Lake Huron and is a member of Henvey Inlet First Nation. As a creator his work is multidisciplinary, highly expressive and full of spirit. His works have been presented and toured across Turtle Island and many nations abroad. Since he was a teenager, much of Solomon's work has been committed to community activation with a focus on unacknowledged and underserved peoples and land. He is passionate about helping people relearn the nature of their ancient bodies and take back the space those bodies occupy as caretakers.

ELIAJAH STEFURA (He/Him) is a technician in the city of Toronto. He began working professionally in the industry after his graduation from Toronto Metropolitan University in 2019. Eli joined the C+C team in 2021 and is now the Citadel's Technical Director, also acting as engineer of the company's livestream programming.

CLAIRE WHITAKER is a freelance dance artist based in Toronto. After graduating from The School of Toronto Dance Theatre, her class did a residency with La Escuela Profesional de Danza de Mazatlán in Mexico. Claire attended the Gaga Intensive at Orsolina 28, TransFormation Danse and online Dance Church classes organized by Kate Wallich. Claire has worked and performed under Colleen Snell (Fringe, 2018), Citadel + Compagnie (2019-24), and Kylie Thompson (Fringe, 22) and is a member of the wind in the leaves collective. Most recently, Claire has been collaborating with two collective artists in curating social events around poetry and dance.



wind in the leaves collective

Presenter-in-Residence at The Citadel

The 'wind in the leaves collective' has developed a significant body of work over the past decade. Our unique approach to multi-disciplinary performance takes its lead from the artistic director's poetry which is explored and choreographed by dancers, musicians and video artists.

This collaboration across disciplines has been successful in engaging audiences and building a profile for this type of performance. The 'collective' is now staging performances with other artists that involve similar elements, i.e., connecting poetry with dance and music in creation and performance. The 'collective' has been approached by the Citadel to curate performances and is now Presenter in Residence at the Citadel where selected artists will share the stage and advance the notion of poetry and dance as a seamless art form practiced by racialized and Indigenous artists and drawing from historic pre-colonial practices made contemporary.

www.windintheleavescollective.com

Citadel + Compagnie is an artistic and community entity with a dual purpose. It is at once both place and people.

The Citadel: Ross Centre for Dance is a remarkable building nestled in the Regent Park neighbourhood of Toronto. Since 2012, The Citadel has established itself as an open and welcoming space for artists to rehearse, create and perform, and where the community can learn, communicate, and share.

The Citadel plays host to a range of presentation platforms and residency programs for some of Canada's most interesting choreographers and dance companies. It is also the home of the Citadel Dance Program, providing free dance education to local children and youth, and neighbour Toronto Council Fire's Indigenous dance program, *First Fire*.

Compagnie de la Citadelle is the professional dance company within Citadel + Compagnie. Founded in 2000, the Compagnie is known for its creative processes and intimate performances of classic works and new creations. Through remount initiatives, the Compagnie also dedicates itself to the preservation of important Canadian dance work, making available iconic repertoire to a new generation of dance artists.

Citadel + Compagnie

Artistic Director: Laurence Lemieux

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Production Manager: Marianna Rosato

Programs Coordinator: Sierra Chin Sawdy

Audience Engagement + Box Office Coordinator: Rachana Joshi

Financial Director: Simon Rossiter

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The 2024/25 season is generously supported by



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Citadel Dance Mix 2024 is presented in partnership with Dancemakers

Citadel Dance Exchange is presented in collaboration with
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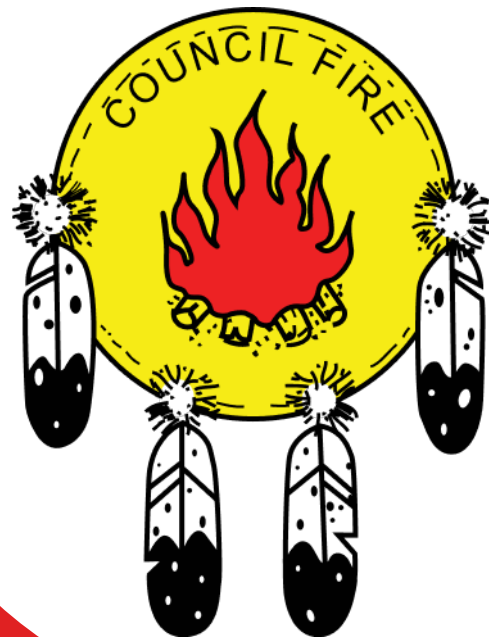
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