

OJICHAAAG

SPIRIT WITHIN

INSPIRED BY A TRUE STORY



WRITTEN AND DIRECTED BY
RACHEL BEAULIEU

LOGLINE

An emotionally devastated woman seeks comfort in her choice to end her life. As she faces death in the form of a spirit, she must decide to let herself go to fight to stay alive.

SYNOPSIS

This short thriller is inspired by a true story. It depicts First Nations lore and Ojibway language in the form of a spirit. Marie, played by Joyce Delaronde (CTV Comedy Acting Good), a woman whose world has crumbled around her attempts to take her own life, only to find herself confronted by a Jiibay (a wandering spirit or ghost played by Curtis Howson of Winner and Deaner 89).

The apparition transports Marie to the spirit world and offers to help her live "the good life". The Jiibay attempts to persuade her to let go and come with them, by sharing their understanding of their unjust life journey to this point. Marie must look at herself and ask why she's been given this chance.

EXPANDED SYNOPSIS

"OJICHAAG - Spirit Within" explores the difficult subject of suicide and mental health issues, particularly among Indigenous women who face higher rates of violence and trauma. By blending harsh reality with traditional Indigenous spirituality, the film aims to start a conversation around these important topics in an engaging and thought-provoking way.

The Jiibay represents a connection to oral stories of spirits from time immemorial. Yet it also shows that there are ways to overcome this darkness by connecting with one's culture, identity, and sources of strength, whether that be family, friends, or spiritual beliefs.

Ultimately, the film delivers a message of hope - that even when we hit our lowest points, we have the power to choose life over giving in to our broken spirits. I hope audiences of all backgrounds can relate to Marie's powerful story of perseverance.

DIRECTORS STATEMENT



“OJICHAAG - Spirit Within” explores the difficult subject of suicide and mental health issues, particularly among Indigenous women who face higher rates of violence and trauma. By blending harsh reality with traditional Indigenous spirituality, the film aims to start a conversation around these important topics in an engaging and thought-provoking way.

The Jiibay represents a connection to oral stories of spirits from time immemorial. Yet it also shows that there are ways to overcome this darkness by connecting with one’s culture, identity, and sources of strength, whether that be family, friends, or spiritual beliefs.

Ultimately, the film delivers a message of hope - that even when we hit our lowest points, we have the power to choose life over giving in to our broken spirits. I hope audiences of all backgrounds can relate to Marie’s powerful story of perseverance.

DIRECTORS BIO



RACHEL BEAULIEU is an Anishinaabekwe from Sandy Bay Ojibway First Nation in southern Manitoba Canada. She graduated in 2010 from Assiniboine Community College with a Media Production diploma, winning two awards for her recognized talent.

Rachel's professional experience ranges from commercial/brand, promotion, narrative, documentary, broadcast, and educational. Her work is influenced by her unique perspective as a First Nations woman and aims to make space for creators with a diverse vision.

As an eager young person in the industry, Rachel has received various professional mentorships and gained opportunities to hone her skills.

She worked on short biographies and documentary films for the National Screen Institute, the National Film Board of Canada, and produced documentaries and narrative films for her own company, Can Dream Productions.

She has had her audio and video production work on CBC, CTV, FOX, Al Jazeera, NBC, APTN, SHAW TV, and Bell MTS, as well as in international film festivals such as the American Indian Film Festival, Vancouver International Film Festival, LA Skins Fest, and the Gimli International Film Festival.

Rachel has written, produced, and directed all of her films, Red River Roots, Hunger, Crush, and Children of the Stars. Rachel won the Gimli International Film Festival's RBC \$10,000 Emerging Filmmakers Pitch Competition and premiered Mèmere July 2023. She also is currently in post-production for her mid-length thriller film, "Ojichaak - Spirit Within" set to be completed in 2024.

Rachel holds membership to DOC Manitoba and Canada, Winnipeg Film Group. She is an alumna of the National Screen Institute, Women in the Director's Chair Short Works Program Story and Leadership program, and recently the Tricksters & Writers program with Women in Film and Television Vancouver. She is also the assistant director for the Winnipeg Indigenous Filmmaker Collective.

Rachel currently works as the Audio Video Producer at the Manitoba First Nations Education Resource Centre. She creates original content for cultural and educational purposes; the majority is shared online as viral videos.

Although she has a full-time career as a video producer, Rachel is active in the local filmmaking community. She is currently the Assistant Director for the Winnipeg Indigenous Filmmakers Collective, which provides monthly meeting events and training opportunities to Indigenous participants.

FAQ

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

WHERE DID THE INSPIRATION FOR THIS FILM COME FROM?

The story is written around true events and real struggles with depression, suicidal ideation, and intergenerational trauma. The Jiibay, or wandering spirit represents how spirituality can be both a burden and a savior, and Marie's journey speaks to the resilience and perseverance we need to overcome our life struggles.

WHY BLEND TRADITIONAL SPIRITUAL ELEMENTS WITH SUCH A SERIOUS SUBJECT?

Indigenous cultures have long used storytelling to share and teach complex issues in meaningful ways. By intertwining traditional spiritual elements like the Jiibay, a spirit, the film gains an authentic perspective, as most indigenous peoples struggle deeply both with their cultural reclamation and the rippling effects of intergenerational trauma.

WHAT RESEARCH WENT INTO PORTRAYING THE JIIBAY?

In an aim to ensure the Jiibay's dialogue and pronunciation were accurate, we utilized traditional stories or spirit beings and personal experiences to create the character of a lost and maybe trickster-type spirit. Anishinaabemowin was an important aspect that was developed with fluent language speakers and support from many to decolonized the dialogue within the film.

WHAT DO YOU HOPE AUDIENCES TAKE AWAY FROM THE FILM?

Above all, I hope the film starts a conversation around the difficult topics of suicide, mental illness, domestic violence, and intergenerational trauma - issues that disproportionately impact Indigenous communities. By shining a light, we can begin to make progress in supporting those in need.

At the same time, I want the film to be an empowering portrayal of an Indigenous woman overcoming her struggles through perseverance and reconnecting with her cultural identity. Marie's story shows that our struggles do not have to define us. We manage our spirits.

CAST BIOS



JOYCE DELARONDE AS MARIE

Joyce Delaronde is a writer, director, and actor originally from Duck Bay, Manitoba. She plays the lead role of Marie, which she relates to her own life experiences with suicide, loss, and intergenerational trauma. Joyce recently starred in the CTV comedy series "Acting Good."



CURTIS HOWSON AS JIIBAY

Curtis Howson is quickly becoming a highly regarded actor for his performances in supernatural and thriller roles, thanks to his large 6'7" stature and intense screen presence. He brings an otherworldly quality to his role as the terrifying 7-foot-tall jiibay, a wandering spirit.



TECHNICAL SPECIFICATION

OJICHAAG

Project type:	Film
Sub. Category	Short / Indigenous
Runtime:	00:11:26 est.
Completion Date:	06/24
Year of production:	2023
Genre:	Psychological Thriller
Age Restrictions:	PG13+
Location of Origin:	Manitoba, Canada
Location of Filming:	Manitoba, Canada
Premiere (Post TBD):	Date to be determined
Language spoken:	English, Anishinaabemowin
Shooting Format:	Digital
Aspect Ratio:	16:9
Film Color (Black&White/Colour):	Color
Camera:	Sony FX9
Subtitles:	English, Anishinaabemowin

CAST & CREW LIST

CAST

MARIE.....JOYCE DELARONDE
WANDERING SPIRIT (JIIBAY).....CURTIS HOWSON
KENNYDEREK JAMES TRAPP
BEASTIE.....APRIL BLACKBIRD
PARAMEDIC.....DEREK JAMES TRAPP

CREW

ANISHINAABE TRANSLATORED BEAUCHAMP
ON-SET ELDERS..... MARLENE CARRIERE
ED BEAUCHAMP
DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY.....RACHEL BEAULIEU
PRODUCTION COMPANY..... CAN DREAM PRODUCTIONS
PRODUCTION MANAGER.....JOYCE DELARONDE
ASSISTANT DIRECTORANIKO KERE
DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY.....JOHN WAPIOKE
COMPOSER/SOUND DESIGNER.....LANA WINTERHALT
GAFFERCATHY HERBERT
1ST CAMERA ASSISTANT.....DAN ROBERTSON
.....LINDSEY MURDOCK
FOCUS PULLER.....CARL MATEO
GRIP.....KRISTOFER RECACHO
.....GARRET GUNNING
SOUND RECORDIST.....CODY BLACKSMITH
EDITOR.....DEREK MCMECHAN
CUSTOM DESIGNER.....LANA SINCLAIR
ART DIRECTOR.....DAVID THOMAS
ART ASSISTANTDOUG THOMAS
HAIR AND MAKEUP ARTIST.....LISA DIANE RUECKERT
SET DECORATORMAUREEN PEEBLES
CRAFT SERVICES.....MIRA BEAULIEU-PETIT
COSTUME RENTAL.....STEVE PACAUD

CAST & CREW LIST

SPECIAL THANKS

ROBERT BEAULIEU MAXINE BEAULIEU MIRA BEAULIEU JESSICA BEAULIEU
CATHERINE BEAULIEU KATRINA BEAULIEU
FLORENCE PAYNTER JUDY DOOLITTLE BRITTA ROULETTE PAULINE GENAILLE
SOPHIA TRUDZIK DARREN CABLE EVA THOMAS
WILFRED BUCK RYAN COPPER ANDY THOMAS
WINNIPEG FILM GROUP
WINNIPEG INDIGENOUS FILMMAKERS COLLECTIVE



INDIGENOUS SCREEN OFFICE
BUREAU DE L'ÉCRAN AUTOCHTONE

FILM STILLS



FILM STILLS



OJICHAAG

INSPIRED BY A TRUE STORY

SCREENING NOW

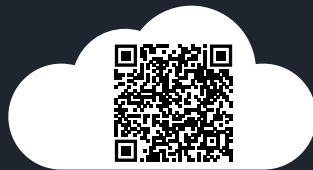
CONTACT

For more information or to request an online screener, please contact:

Rachel Beaulieu

Writer/Director/Producer

CAN DREAM PRODUCTIONS
candreamproductions@gmail.com
204-292-1381



CLOUD CONTENT

 **@OJICHAAG**