

Smoke Signals Radio Archive Episode 1992-02-01  
Segment 1  
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*Dan Smoke, Mary Lou Smoke, and John Turner tell listeners that Tomson Highway, Indigenous Canadian playwright, will be visiting the university. Dan also introduces this week's main event: a recording of a presentation to the First Nations Circle Constitutional Committee given by Bruce Elijah, speaking about the inherent rights of First Nations people and how they are beneficial to future generations.*

Host(s): Dan Smoke, Mary Lou Smoke  
Guest(s): John Turner

**DAN SMOKE:** Greetings! Aanii! Boozhoo! Sge:no, shekoli to all my brothers and sisters. You are listening to Smoke Signals, a First Nations Radio Program here at Radio Western, CHRW 94.7 FM. We are heard every Saturday from 12:00 to 1:00. The song you just heard was "**Long Hot Summer in the Great White North**" from the group **7th Fire** from their album **Well, What Does it Take?** My name is **Dan Smoke**, I'm in the studio today with **John Turner** and **Mary Lou Smoke**. Hi John, hi Mary Lou.

**JOHN TURNER:** Hi Dan, how are you?

**MARY LOU SMOKE:** Hi.

**DS:** Very good, thank you. Yes, last night we attended a very pleasant evening courtesy of the **Atlohsa** Benefit for the **Native Family Violence Shelter for Women and Children** that is presently being built and is due to be completed by May of this year. It's very apropos.

**JT:** That was a good time, too.

**DS:** Last night, yes, we were greeted with the sounds of **Siren**, some storytelling, some guitar playing. How did you enjoy that?

**JT:** Oh, I found it terrific, I'm a big fan of Siren to start with. And the actor who was there was very good too. He quoted some passages from **Chief Seattle**. He was very interesting; the whole thing was. It was good.

**DS:** His name was **Ron Cook**.

**JT:** Yeah, right.

**DS:** Apparently, I think he comes from up near **Geraldton** way. He's **Cree First Nations**.

**JT:** And he's quite a good actor. He's been in **London** before. He did the **Crackwalker** here about three years ago at the **McManus Theatre** downstairs at **Theatre London**. He said that they're going to take a production of *Crackwalker* to London, **England**, too. Somewhere, I forgot...the **Gatehouse Theatre**, I think?

**DS:** That's right, yeah.

**JT:** So that's good!

**DS:** That is good. He was also in...I guess he was one of the understudies for the ***Dry Lips Oughta Move to Kapuskasing*** that was at the **Royal Alex** this year.

**JT:** Yeah, that's right. Oh! And while we're talking about that, we should mention to our viewers that **Tomson Highway** is going to be here at the university. When? Next week? On the 19<sup>th</sup> and the 20<sup>th</sup>. Wednesday and Thursday.

**DS:** Yes. Tomson Highway is coming on the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup>. On the 19<sup>th</sup>, he's going to be speaking at the business school here at Western, room 40 at 4:00. And on the 20<sup>th</sup> at 11:00, he's conducting, he's going to be a part of a drama workshop that's going to be in room 224.

**JT:** Yeah, the drama workshop at the **UC building** here at the university. He's being here as part of the tribute to **James Reaney** who's retiring from the **English department** at the university. Reaney is one of **Canada's** top playwrights. He goes way, way back.

**DS:** Tomson Highway was a student of his.

**JT:** Oh, I didn't know that. No, yeah, that's right! And you mentioned last night that Tomson Highway worked here somewhere, didn't he? For a while?

**DS:** Yes, he was employed at the **Native People's Resource Centre** I think, up until 1979.

**JT:** On **Epworth**?

**DS:** On Epworth, yes, yes.

**JT:** Oh, what a- I never even knew that this genius was in our city.

**DS:** Yes, he was. I think he was going for his music degree. I think he completed it here at Western. Another one of the shining alumni.

**JT:** I wonder if he took any of the drama courses here at the university.

**DS:** I imagine he'll share that with us when he comes. And just for our listeners' benefit, the Native community of Western is planning to have a reception in his honour to welcome him into our territory and to make him feel very at home here.

**JT:** Where is that going to be, Dan?

**DS:** I believe it'll be at N'Amerind. We've made preliminary contact with **N'Amerind Friendship Centre**, our friends over there have said that they support that idea. But right now, we have a runner up in **Toronto** making that necessary contact with Tomson. That will be the news that will be coming back to us on Tuesday or Wednesday of next week. Hopefully we can update our listeners next week with something more complete so that they can put it in their calendars and plan for that.

**JT:** That'll be down at N'Amerind, right?

**DS:** At the N'Amerind Friendship Centre, at the corner of **Colborne** and **Horton**. 260 Colborne.

**JT:** Who can go? Do you have to be invited, or?

**DS:** Well, Mary Lou, you're one of the **Board of Directors** at N'Amerind.

**JT:** Yeah! That's another piece of news.

**MLS:** Anyone can come, just bring your favourite food. Come out and meet your favourite playwright.

**JT:** That's great! So it's like a **potluck**?

**MLS:** Oh yes, potluck.

**JT:** Oh, this is handy sitting behind a board member of the N'Amerind. Congratulations, by the way.

**MLS:** Oh, you're welcome.

**JT:** I just found out about this two or three days ago, but you knew about it a month ago.

**MLS:** Oh, well, it was big news, I guess.

**DS:** And another event that's happening on Tuesday, I believe—or, it's already happened, according to Mary Lou, was that the **N'Amerind Sweetgrass Education Centre** is back in operation, I understand.

**MLS:** Yes. We're supposed to have an official opening on Tuesday morning at 9:00

**DS:** That's Tuesday February the 4<sup>th</sup>, 9:00 in the morning, for our listeners who are interested in seeing Native people take control of Native education. We're looking at the future generations and education that we feel that is necessary for them to learn. We're practicing self-government in that respect—equality. That's something to look forward to, as well.

**DS:** But today, our show, we're going to be playing some tape of a presentation that was made to the **First Nations Circle Constitutional Committee**. It's the parallel hearing that are being conducted presently, right across Canada, by First Nations people. This Circle is travelling to First Nations communities throughout Canada. They came to London actually, they came to the **Oneida Settlement**, and were at the **Standing Stone School** two weeks ago, on a Monday. Their different chiefs of the different reserves in southwestern **Ontario** were present to make presentations to this committee on how they felt that the Native self-government should be entrenched in the **Canadian constitution**. One of these presentations was from our **Oneida** brother, **Bruce Elijah**. Bruce has been walking a very strong spiritual walk and he has helped many people along the way, and I'm one of those people. It's just like saying I want to give back

something to the community of what I have received from Bruce, and I think the greatest gift that I can give back to the community is to share some of his wisdom that he imparted to the **First Nations Circle** that day. He spoke at length about how First Nations people view themselves, and how their inherent rights are very relevant to our future generations. With that in mind, I'd just like to take this time to introduce that Bruce Elijah will be our feature today.

**DS:** Right now, we're going to take a music break. We're going to listen to **Joanne Shenandoah**, from her album ***She Sings***, and the song will be "**We Are the Iroquois.**"