

TAKE FIVE

A Revealing Q and A
with...

Marion Newman



Marion Newman is firmly established as one of Canada's most accomplished singers. Her operatic roles include Carmen and Rosina in *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*. Upcoming appearances include world premieres of several works, operas and concerts that speak to Marion's First Nations identity. This season, highlights for Marion include the premiere of Jennifer Butler's *Klee Wyck Woman* with Emily Carr String Quartet at ISCM World New Music Days, and the role of Dr. Wilson in the premiere of *Missing* with City Opera Vancouver/Pacific Opera Victoria.

When did you first think of yourself as an artist?

I don't remember ever not thinking of myself as an artist. I come from a family of artists and growing up under that influence I have always believed everyone has the capacity to be an artist in their own field or medium. My dad and brother are incredible carvers, jewellers and painters in the Kwagiulth tradition, mum is a fabric artist and an educator, and my sister is a social worker who makes an art of listening and really hearing people. My art has been music right from the very beginning.

Who helped you develop your voice as an artist?

Many, many people. Starting with my parents and early piano teachers, next my voice teachers and the many colleagues I've worked with, watched and drawn inspiration from over the years. I believe that we never stop developing our voices as we grow and change and my sister and brother continue to help me to shape how I use my voice through our daily conversations, texts and sharing of ideas from whichever corners of the world we are in.

What's something that's inspired you this week?

Tsianina Redfeather and the path she created for people like me, at a time when being an Indigenous woman meant next to no opportunities. And my incredible colleagues on *I Call myself Princess* by Jani Lauzon. Jani's story-telling and topic really resonates for me, as a First Nations opera singer.

What's your favourite restaurant in the city to visit?

I often find myself heading to [Salt](#) on Ossington. They make gorgeous tapas and cocktails and they have opened my taste buds to the wonders of great Portuguese wine. I also love the relaxed and romantic setting.

What do you want to see more of on Toronto stages?

Indigenous stories told by Indigenous writers, composers and performers! Canada 150 brought about a few more opportunities, along with the hot topic of Reconciliation. There are unfortunately still quite a few creators who think they have the right and the knowledge to tell our stories for us, but they are all missing the mark in a big way. This is the time for hearing the truth of Indigenous experience.

Marion is currently appearing in [I Call myself Princess](#) on stage at the Daniels Spectrum - Aki Studio Theatre until September 30.