

# Concieved and Directed by Ping Chong Written by Ping Chong and Sara Zatz

## DIRECTOR'S NOTE

In 1992, I made the first Undesirable Elements' program in what became an ongoing series of work based on the oral histories of immigrants, displaced peoples, and those living as others within their own communities. Since then, I have traveled around the country and beyond, and created more than 27 original works in the series. The process is deceptively simple.

I interview people within a community who came from different cultures--broadly defined. I ask them about where they are from, the history of their cultures, their experiences living in the community where we are making the piece.

From these interviews, I weave a performance text that the individuals perform as an ensemble. Each new work has been a testament to lives lived and to the mass displacements of peoples and cultures in the past centuries, which continues even today.

One of those productions, Children of War, was seen by Karen Christilles, Lied Center associate director, who then, along with Haskell Indian

Nations University, invited me to make a new piece exploring the experience of Native American people living in the Laurence community.

However, Native Voices is not the first Undesirable Elements production to feature the words and stories of native peoples. Starting with the very first production in 1992, past productions have featured the voices of people from the Oneida, Ojibwe, Chickasaw, Hidatsa and Jemez nations.

## NATIVE VOICES--

SECRET HISTORY-- shares its artistic structure and creative history with previous productions of Undesirable Elements. However, unlike in some previous productions, the common link between the participants is more than shared residency in a local community. The people you will see share another powerful connection, their collective experience of living as "out-siders" in their own homeland.

U. S. Bank is pleased to be the proud sponsor for the Lied Center's performance of Ping Chong's NATIVE VOICES-- SECRET HISTORY Encouraging a better understanding of cultural and

racial perspectives can only build bridges that make our community a better place to live. U. S. Bank is pleased to sponsor such a worthwhile and important event at the Lied Center.

This performance is sponsored in part by the Lied Performance Fund.

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## Russell Blackbird:

### PROGRAM FEATURES:

in collaboration with Russell Blackbird, Carly Jo Blemmel, Dennison Dugi, Dianne Yeahquo Reyner, Lori Tapahonso. Patrick Carrier, stage manager, KU graduate student, theatre and film.

NATIVE VOICES-- SECRET HISTORY: is an original production by acclaimed theatre artist Ping Chong, a new work in his ongoing Undesirable Elements series of community specific, oral history/theatre projects examining the lives of people living between cultures: an exploration of race, culture and identity in America.

Since 2002, Ping Chong and Company has created more than 25 original works in this series, across the United States and abroad. Each production is made in a specific community, with local participants who are non-actors, testifying to their real lives and experiences. The stories of each participant are