

# 'Spiderwoman' performance brightens Anchorage

Most Alaskans are familiar with the portrayal of traditional American Indians in the film *Dances with Wolves*, but few have seen the work of Native American stage actors in comic plays that address the lives of contemporary Native Americans. That will change when

Out North Theater Company brings Spiderwoman Theater—three Native American Grandmothers with more energy than a cyclone—to Anchorage for a week of live performances and workshops at the University of Alaska during AFN week.

With the experience gained from numerous stage, film and television credits, these three Native American sisters, Lisa Mayo, Gloria Miguel and Muriel Miguel created Spiderwoman Theater, named after the Hopi spirit of creativity who taught people how to weave. They call their style of performance "storyweaving" and blend stories with music and dance into boisterously funny and intensely serious performances. After nearly two decades of performing across the U.S., Canada, Europe and Australia, Spiderwoman Theater will finally make their Alaska debut.

Spiderwoman Theater is being presented during this International Year of Indigenous People as part of Out North's continuing commitment to serve Alaskans of all ages and backgrounds with unique theater experiences that come from

the voices of minority communities. Out North's artistic director, Gene Dugan, made the decision to invite Spiderwoman Theater after Tlingit theater artist had seen the company perform at a Native American writers' conference in the Lower 48.

Born and raised in Brooklyn of a Kuna Indian father and a Rappahannock Indian mother, the three sisters received professional training in opera and theater in New York City. Benson assured Dugan there was nothing like Spiderwoman Theater in Alaska and encouraged him to schedule their performances.

"Their superb mastery of comedy has the power to break down barriers between urban and rural, Native and non-Native. We are very lucky that Spiderwoman Theater was able to add Anchorage to their busy touring schedule,"

Dugan said.

Spiderwoman Theater will perform *Rever-Ber-Berations*, their wacky yet poignant tale of cultural heritage, déjà-vu and family life as seen from a Native American perspective. Performances are scheduled for October 14, 15 and 16 at 8 p.m. in the Williamson Auditorium on the University of Alaska campus near the intersection of Lake Otis Blvd. and 36th Ave. Tickets may be reserved at any CarrsTix location, or by calling 263-ARTS (263-2787) or 1-800-GRT-SEAT (1-800-478-7328). Tickets will also be available at the door. Admission is \$20, with half price admission at the door for full time students.

In addition to the three performances of *Rever-Ber-Berations*, Spiderwoman Theater will offer a storyweaving workshop for all ages on Wednesday, October 14 at 7:30 p.m. in Building K on the UAA campus, and an acting workshop for teen and adults on Saturday, October 16 at 10 a.m. at the same location. The sisters will also participate in lunchtime panel discussion on *New Directions in Native American Theater* at noon on Friday, October 15 at Cyrano's Bookstore (413 D street, one block from the AFN Convention at the Egan Center).