

# KARRIE AUGER

## *nehiyaw mîcimâpôy* indian stew

*pihtikwe*  
sobs release  
fall into  
soft shoulders  
i am  
iskwewsis  
red-eyed snotty-nosed

gamy moose sizzles  
softening sautéed onion

strong hands  
weave  
whisper  
*my girl*  
into tangled long brown hair

*nipiy*  
carrot coin suns  
celery moons

*api*  
patchwork quilt  
leftover pieces  
smell of *relative*  
rests on my shoulders

peeled potato pieces  
moccasin feet  
shuffling  
spoons and pots  
clanging

songs  
of a *nehiyaw* kitchen

flour to thicken  
a single bay leaf  
black pepper

*mîciso*  
i cry a little harder

my tears salting my stew

## Glossary of nehiyawewin (Cree) words

nehiyaw – a cree person  
mîcimâpôy – stew  
pihtikwe – come in  
nipiy – water  
api – sit  
iskwesis – little girl  
mîciso – eat

### Karrie Auger – Poet Statement

“nehiyaw mîcimâpôy,” or “Indian Stew,” was written in response to needing a remembering of what it feels like to be held deeply in relations. As many of us know, colonial systems have left our people with deep wounds. These systems have done everything they can to take from us, our land, our culture, and our language. I wanted nehiyaw mîcimâpôy to speak to the complexities held in culture and in language that may seem simple to other people. A bowl of stew may not seem to carry a lot of cultural significance, but when you look deeper, everything we know about how to be good relatives is in that bowl of stew. My poetry often has a mishmash of Bush Cree and Plains Cree, because I learned most of my Cree from the Plains Cree people. These days though, my mom and dad are helping me to learn our dialect. I used to feel like I needed to know all the correct ways to write and speak, but I realize that this is not what is important. What is important is what is understood in the language. It matters to me that I understand nipiy to be water, and how sacred water is in our culture. It matters to me that I can remember growing up hearing words like mîciso and api. It means that I can pass these on to the next generation. I hope to be fluent one day. When I am eighty-five years old and I can speak to the other kohkoms and moshums in my language and share stories, I will have felt like I had a successful life