

presented by
**THEATRE
DIRECT**



SPARK

THE FUTURE

April 12th – 16th 2021

FESTIVAL PROGRAM

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I'm so proud of Sehar and Madeleine for their passionate work putting this festival together alongside Kate - always there to make sure everything happens according to plan. As an artistic director, there is nothing more you can ask for than to have such forward thinking, innovative, inclusive, organized and creative individuals at the helm. The line-up is top notch and so well curated; if this is the future, then I say, it's looking bright. So, as the stay at home orders hang above our heads, let's light up the week together - let's learn new stuff; let's meet new people. Like you, dear artists, I am so very excited to be part of this festival! I'll see you there. And one day, when we bump into each other at the theatre, (like for real - physically bump into each other at the cheese table), let's reminisce about this. I can't wait until that moment, but until then, let's connect in these new spaces. You never know, something we discover might change the course of our lives, or our work, forever.... #SparkTheFuture

Lisa Marie DiLiberto (Artistic Director)



Dear friends,

Thank you for joining us at Spark the Future!, Theatre Direct's third annual Forward March Festival.

In the early days of planning this festival, Lisa Marie and Kate encouraged us to dream big and explore all of the possibilities an online festival could unlock for us and our audiences. Spark the Future!'s programming is an extension of what we're asking and examining ourselves at Theatre Direct.



In these uncertain times and amidst our dreaming and exploration, we've learned one thing for sure: inspiration and hope can be found right at home, in our community and, amongst our artists. What started as a pretty plain-looking Google doc has now evolved into a national online festival featuring new works of theatre for young audiences and conversations from artists in our community and for that, we couldn't be more excited.

A big thank you to the Theatre Direct staff for your patience and support--and letting us miss a whole lot of staff meetings to prepare. And another to Cole Vincent and Frank Donato for joining the Forward March Festival team and bringing their expertise with them--we are grateful.

The work never stops. The artistry never stops. The process is what changes. We are grateful to all of the artists who answered the call to show us the future. We can see it now and it is bright.

Enjoy the festival and please find us in the virtual venues! We would love to meet you :)

Sehar Bhojani & Madeleine Brown (Spark the Future! Producers)



FESTIVAL SCHEDULE



	MONDAY April 12	TUESDAY April 13	WEDNESDAY April 14	THURSDAY April 15	FRIDAY April 16
12:00- 12:30pm	The Animals Who Wanted to Live Together By Djennie Laguerre NTP Q+A	Outside the Actress' Studio By Jamie "Lucinda Miu" Lujan NTP Q+A	Future Ancestors By Sheniz Janmohamed NTP Q+A	Rooted Imagination By 2Skins Entertainment NTP Q+A	Where My Thoughts Take Me By Saba Akhtar NTP Q+A
12:30- 1:30pm	BREAK				
1:30- 2:30pm	Maroula and the Balance of Nature By Haley Vincent DIG Q+A	Education Know-It-All By Rabiya Mansoor DIG Q+A	Doomsday vs. Dreamday and the Deepdrawer By Keira Forde DIG Q+A	Voice in the Shadows By Passing Through Theatre DIG Q+A	What was that bleep, click, hum? By The Warehouse Troupe DIG Q+A
2:30- 3:00pm	BREAK				
3:00- 5:00pm	Festival Welcome + The Creative Art of Being © Facilitated by Althea Knight ART	Digital Practices + Curation Workshop + Panel PUB ASL	Accessibility in the Digital Age Workshop + Panel PUB ASL	Redefining TYA : Theatre FOR vs. BY Young Audiences Workshop + Panel PUB ASL	Trivia Night! ART

LEGEND

all times given are Eastern Standard Time

EVENT TYPE

NTP

Coffee + Collabs : National Transformations Project – see p. 6

Who? Spark the Future! Artists and Delegates
Where? Gather.town

DIG

Digital Performances – see p. 11

Who? Spark the Future! Artists and Delegates
Virtual Spring Break Campers
Where? HopIn

ART

Industry Series : Artist Events – see p. 14

Who? Spark the Future! Artists and Delegates
Where? HopIn

PUB

Industry Series : Public Events – see p. 16

Who? General Public (Pre-Registration Required)
Where? HopIn

ACCESSIBILITY + FEATURES

ASL

ASL Interpretation

This event features ASL Interpretation

Q+A

Question and Answer

This event will be followed by a Q+A session.



GATHER.TOWN

In a time when we've moved to online meetings, gather.town is a space that allows us to see and interact with people in a manner closest to in-person events (in my opinion). You are able to control your own avatar similar to how you choose to walk around and explore real life spaces. When you get close to another person (avatar), you see their video pop up and are able to have conversations with those near you. In private spaces, you are able to have a conversation only with those in the same private space, giving you privacy in ways a Zoom meeting may not be able to. The added bonus of being in gather.town is that you are able to interact with customized objects which can be linked to additional resources, such as videos, music, games - the possibilities are kind of endless. It's up to you to choose what you want to explore in your own time. I hope you enjoy this space - it was a blast to create specifically for Spark the Future!

-April Leung



APRIL LEUNG (GATHER.TOWN PRODUCER):

April Siutong Leung 梁筱彤 (she/her) is a performer and creator based in Toronto, raised in Hong Kong. She has worked with companies including: Factory Theatre, Soulpepper Theatre, Cahoots Theatre, fu-GEN Theatre, DopoLavoro Teatreale, Solar Stage, and Carousel Players. Her current work tends to examine what it means to be Chinese-

Canadian, emergent and surveillant technologies, as well as identity and relationships formed through food. April was recently awarded the Ellen Ross Stuart Award to develop "Inside the Claypot Rice". She also created her first media piece "Timekeeper" with support from Canada Council for the Arts' Digital Originals initiative. www.aprilleung.com

GATHER.TOWN INSTRUCTIONS:

The day before a Gather.town event, you will receive a link. Click on the link, create your avatar and join the space! Once inside use your arrow keys to navigate the room and chat with other people.

For more information, watch this short video for a brief tutorial:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eWmxM79-z3E> or visit <https://gather.town> for more information

HOPIN

HopIn is an online events platform that connects people around the world through video, audio and text chat. Catch a virtual performance on the HopIn Stage, or engage in discussion at a talkback in one of the Sessions. HopIn is also home to many of our festival resources - access the festival program, schedule, land acknowledgement, and info about other Theatre Direct programming. HopIn will host the Industry Events and Digital Performances for Spark the Future!

HOPIN INSTRUCTIONS:

The day of the event, you will receive a link to take you to the HopIn Space for the day. If it's your first time joining an event with HopIn you will have to create an account quickly before entering the event. Once in, you can use the left navigation menu to go to the Stage, check out Sessions or check out other information. To find where your event is, take a look at the event descriptions below.

For more info on how to use HopIn, you can watch this video

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JgGV0lbOPUU> or visit <https://hopin.com/>



SEHAR BHOJANI (FESTIVAL PRODUCER)



Sehar Bhojani is a Muslim-Canadian actor, producer and writer from Hamilton. She is a graduate of the National Theatre School of Canada's acting program and is currently the Associate Artistic Director at Theatre Direct. As an actor, Sehar has appeared in various commercials, television shows and her first feature film SLAXX is now available on Shudder, Amazon Prime Video and was recently named as one of five "top picks" horror movies by The New York Times. As a

producer, Sehar has worked with a number of artists and companies across Canada. She is currently in development with two projects, a theatre piece that examines the abuse of power in theatre schools and an original series about a Muslim Canadian family. Sehar is grateful to her colleagues at Theatre Direct for their unwavering support as both an artist and artistic leader.

COLE VINCENT (FESTIVAL PRODUCTION MANAGER)



Cole is a stage manager, production manager and lighting designer for theatre and live events. He is excited to be working with the Theatre Direct team on this digital incarnation of the Forward March Festival.

Previous credits include: Eraser : A New Normal (Theatre Direct); Kitne Saare Laloo Yahan Pey Hain (NextStage Festival); Aqsarniit, Anne of Green Gables, Jesus Christ Superstar (The Charlottetown Festival);

Eraser (The Riser Project - Why Not Theatre, Theatre Direct); Rose (Soulpepper); Birds of a Feather (Roseneath Theatre); King Lear, Twelfth Night, Hamlet, All's Well That Ends Well (Canadian Stage). Cole was also a Venue Stage Manager at the Toronto International Film Festival and holds a BFA Theatre Production and Design from York University.

MADELEINE BROWN (FESTIVAL PRODUCER)



Madeleine Brown is an award-winning Toronto-based playwright and actor who grew up between Peterborough, Ontario and Edinburgh, Scotland. Her last three comedies debuted at the Toronto Fringe Festival including a sold-out run of Patron's Pick winner, Everyone Wants A T-Shirt!. She has previously received NOW Magazine Awards for Outstanding Ensemble and Individual Performance, is an alumna of the Loran Award, Canada's top undergraduate

scholarship, and was an inaugural Nightwood Theatre Young Innovator. In January 2020, she was named one of two recipients of The Ellen Ross Stuart "Opening Doors" Award. Madeleine volunteers with L'Arche Toronto's Sol Express, a performance troupe for adults with intellectual disabilities, and plays euphonium in the Swansea Community Concert Band. Training: University of Toronto Mississauga, Sheridan College, Theatre Gargantua (Artistic Mentorship Program), Mermaid Theatre (AniMotion Program) and The Second City Training Centre (Conservatory and Writing Programs).

FRANK DONATO (FESTIVAL LIVESTREAM DIRECTOR)



Frank Donato is an Ottawa based video designer who is fascinated by large scale projection and digital immersion. Fortunate to get his start playing in the digital sand with SpiderWebShow Performance in 2018; Frank was the video designer for live/digital hybrid show The Revolutions. Little did he know just how much this experience would inform the majority of his practice just a few years later. Prior to the pandemic, Frank was the video designer for the Great Canadian Theatre

Company's Daisy and most recently was the stream and video designer/operator for Tarragon Theatre's live online production of Orestes.



THE ANIMALS WHO WANTED TO LIVE TOGETHER

Monday, April 12th | 12:00-12:30pm EST

Gather.town | Q+A | Moderator : Sehar Bhojani

Commissioned by Theatre Direct for The Transformations Project, hosted by the National Arts Centre

The Animals Who Wanted to Live Together is the story of five animals who meet under the Baobab tree after a fight with their respective families. They decide to live together and to create a new society, but everything goes wrong within the first meeting. I, the storyteller, ask the children and the grown-ups how this new society could have been better.



DEJENNIE LAGUERRE

Djennie Laguerre is an Actress, Author and Storyteller and a graduate of the Stella Adler Acting Conservatory (New York) and the University of Ottawa (BAC in Art; Theatre and Literature). She has been acclaimed as the performer and author of *Manman la mer* at Théâtre la Catapulte and *Espoir/Espwa* (which she authored with Carline Zamar, Edwige Jean-Pierre) *Le malade imaginaire*, *LES ZINSPIRÉS and LES ZINSPIRÉS 3D at, Seventeen (Anonymous) Women at the Infintheatre and REZ SISTERS at the Factory Theatre. She is the author and performer of *Rendez-Vous with Home/Lakay* at the SummerWorks Festival, 2008, & at the Théâtre français de Toronto, 2010 ALSO presented in several storytelling festivals such as Les Contes nomades (NAC) and Le Festival du loup de Lafontaine. She is proud of the ambitious tour of both English and French versions of *Rendez-vous with Home/ Lakay* with the iconic Black Theatre Workshop (Montreal, February 2018 and November 2019) and the English version with Roseneath Theatre in Toronto 2020!

Film/TV: *Flashpoint*, *Degrassi Junior High* and *Mrs Happiness /Madame Bonheur*, to MiniTFO.

She received the Spotlight Award at the SummerWorks Festival in 2008 for *Rendez-Vous with Home*. She is a Dora Awards nominee for "Outstanding Performance – Individual" *Rendez-Vous with Home* 2020, for "Outstanding Performance – Individual" for *Les Zinspirés* and "Outstanding Performance – Ensemble". Also nomination for "Best Actress" at the METAs Awards 2018 for *Rendez-vous Home/ Lakay* and . Your children know her as the storyteller and dancer *Madame Bonheur* at MiniTFO/CBC.

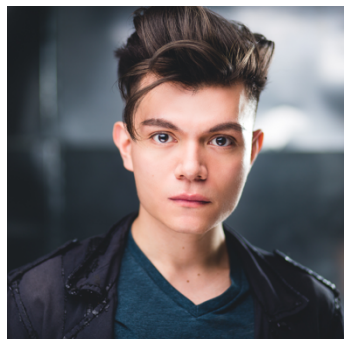


OUTSIDE THE ACTRESS' STUDIO

Tuesday, April 13th | 12:00-12:30pm EST

Gather.town | Q+A | *Moderator : Sehar Bhojani*

Commissioned by Theatre Direct for The Transformations Project, hosted by the National Arts Centre



Jaime Lujan sits down with his drag persona, Lucinda Miu, for an intimate tell-all interview where they discuss her childhood, illustrious career, and familia.

JAMIE "LUCINDA MIU" LUJAN

Jaime Lujan is a Toronto based actor, costume designer, and performance artist. Also known as his drag alter ego, Lucinda Miu, Jaime has most recently appeared in *The Christmas Set-Up* (Lifetime) and *Queens* (CBC Gem). His costuming work can be seen in the first season of *Canada's Drag Race*, *Private Eyes*, and various ad campaigns such as Sodastream, Amazon, and Mattel.



FUTURE ANCESTORS

Wednesday, April 14th | 12:00-12:30pm EST

Gather.town | Q+A | *Moderator : Sehar Bhojani*

Commissioned by Theatre Direct for The Transformations Project, hosted by the National Arts Centre

Climate change, political unrest, racial injustice; these are our inheritances and our responsibilities. In this piece, I ask the questions of myself and my peers: What does it take to be a future ancestor? How do we find answers in our questions, and what do we need to do in this very moment to protect generations who have yet to be born?



SHENIZ JANMOHAMED

Sheniz Janmohamed is a firm believer in fostering community through collaboration and creativity. An author, artist educator, spoken word artist and land artist, Sheniz is a graduate of the MFA in Creative Writing program at the University of Guelph. Throughout her career, Sheniz has had the good fortune to be mentored by authors Dionne Brand, Kuldip Gill and Janice Kulyk Keefer.

Sheniz has performed nationally and internationally for over 10 years, including features at the Jaipur Literature Festival, Aga Khan Museum, and Vancouver Writers Fest to name a few. Her writing has been published in various journals and anthologies including Arc Poetry Magazine, Descant, CV2 and Quill & Quire. Sheniz's first book, *Bleeding Light* (Mawenzi House, 2010), is a collection of English ghazals that explores a woman's journey through night. Throughout her journey, she is caught between West and East, religion and heresy, love and anti-love, darkness and the knowledge of light. Sheniz's second collection of poetry, *Firesmoke* (Mawenzi House, 2014) traces the inception and annihilation of sacred fire and explores the meaning of truth and the self, finding them both in form and emptiness. Her third collection of poetry, *Reminders on the Path* (Mawenzi House), will be published later this year.

Sheniz is also the founder of Questions for Ancestors, a blog that encourages BIPOC writers and artists across Turtle Island to ask questions of their ancestors and provide advice for their descendants.



ROOTED IMAGINATION

Thursday, April 15th | 12:00-12:30pm EST

Gather.town | Q+A | *Moderator : Sehar Bhojani*

Commissioned by Theatre Direct for The Transformations Project, hosted by the National Arts Centre

In *Rooted Imagination*, young professional Asha, sits down for a job interview with Eris, a peculiar and possibly magical being disguised as a gatekeeper to opportunity. In an attempt to discern Asha's deepest desires, Eris takes her on a bizarre journey during which Asha takes the lead towards actualizing her own future.



2SKINS ENTERTAINMENT

2Skins Entertainment is a multimedia production company rooted in the principles of liberation through expression. The company was started by Olivia Viggiani and Khadijah Roberts-Abdullah, both with a background in theatre performance and a proclivity for the digital medium. Our focus is to explore what it means to be othered in society by empowering all human experiences, without question of the moral compass. With a dedication to finding nuance within historically biased storytelling, we are passionate about challenging colonial perceptions of creativity and exceptionality. Making way for fresh new voices as agents of change. 2Skins Entertainment is thankful to the National Arts Centre for providing us a platform for creativity during these times. @olivesbunny @djpauldij @2.skins



WHERE MY THOUGHTS TAKE ME

Friday, April 16th | 12:00-12:30pm EST

Gather.town | Q+A | Moderator : *Sehar Bhojani*

Commissioned by Theatre Direct for The Transformations Project, hosted by the National Arts Centre

Where My Thoughts Take Me is a short film exploring and dissecting an overthinking brain trying to find peace when it feels like the world is falling apart.



SABA AKHTAR

Saba Akhtar (She/They) is Pakistani-Canadian interdisciplinary artist based in Toronto and raised in Houston, Texas.

Her arts practice is a focus on intergenerational trauma, grief and the effects of late-stage capitalism on marginalized communities through absurdism and by integrating multiple art practices and intersecting identities. These practices include filmmaking, photography, performance, writing, and installations.

Saba is an alumni of The A.M.Y Project (2015), The Watah Theatre School (2017), and If You Ask Me (2018 – 2019) and their education has been heavily influenced by mentorship from peers and elders in the community. This has led to a passion for helping others find their voice as an artist. Saba has worked as a mentor community organizations and schools as an arts mentor and facilitator.

Saba has been recognized for her first video installation, *A Mound of Sand*, showcased at The Roundtable Residency (2018) and *Rendezvous with Madness* (2018). Saba has received grants from Why Not Theatre, MT Space, and Workman Arts for their play *She Turns Me Into a Pile of Legos*. Saba was also a finalist for *Hxouse: No More Dreams* (2018). Their latest achievement is her installation *Anatomy of a Home for Rendezvous with Madness* (2020).

Saba has been published in *Mooney on Theatre* (2016), *Black Solo 2: Canadian Anthology of Monodrama* (2017), *M.E.H.A.R* (2020), *Ultra ZINE* (2020)

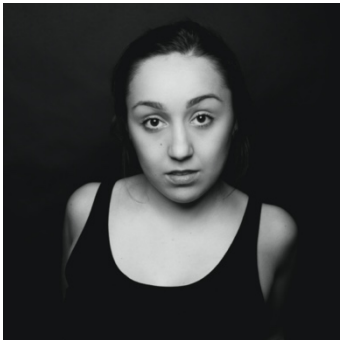


MAROULA AND THE BALANCE OF NATURE

Monday, April 12th | 1:30-2:30pm EST

HopIn STAGE | Q+A | Moderator : Sehar Bhojani

Through the use of shadow puppetry, projection and soundscape you will be transported into Maroula's world. Maroula loves all things nature, but lacks an understanding of its intricacies. What starts innocently, taking home flowers and rocks, soon escalates! Maroula takes responsibility for her actions and learns the true meaning of the balance of nature.



HALEY VINCENT (CREATOR)

Haley Vincent (she/her) is a Ukrainian, and Métis creator hailing from Treaty 1 Territory, Winnipeg, Manitoba. She has had the opportunity to work with Nightwood Theatre as a Young Innovator, Paprika Festival as a Festival Administrator and Windsor Feminist Theatre where she was the Associate Producer for Judith Thompson's newly re-written version of "Watching Glory Die" which travelled to the 2019 Edinburgh Fringe. Haley is currently one of the inaugural members of RMTC's National Mentorship Program. Past credits: Emilia in Othello (Beau Theatre Co.), Mary Jane in Tomson Highway's 'The Incredible Adventures of Mary Jane Mosquito' (Carousel Players) and Marie-Angelique in Women of the Fur Trade (Vault Projects - Toronto Fringe New Play Contest Winner). @theatre_ish @halesvince

EDUCATION KNOW-IT-ALL

Tuesday, April 13th | 1:30-2:30pm EST

HopIn SESSION | Q+A | Moderator : Sehar Bhojani



What does food look like in 2050? In 2200? Join Zorgy the Alien and a few experts from the future and find out in this improvised piece where the kids are in the driver's seat!

RABIYA MANSOOR (CREATOR)

Rabiya Mansoor (she/they) is a Pakistani-Calgarian writer and sketch comedian based in Toronto, ON. Her web series projects in development include: Get Up, Aisha (IPF/iThentic) and Layla is Relevant (2020 WIFT-T Scripted Digital Series Incubator/2020 TAC Media Artists Grant). Her all-WOC sketch comedy troupe, the Don Valley Girls, received a 2019 Sketch Comedy Project Fund grant for their first sketch revue (coming soon in a post-COVID-19 world). She is an alumni of Second City's 2019 Bob Curry Fellowship for emerging diverse comedic voices and has performed at the Toronto, Chicago, and Montreal Sketch Comedy Festivals. @RabuyaMansoor @MansoorRabiya



DOOMSDAY VS. DREAMDAY AND THE DEEPDRAWER



Wednesday, April 14th | 1:30-2:30pm EST

HopIn STAGE | Q+A | Moderator : Sehar Bhojani

Connect through the Virtual Firefly Optic System and experience the virtual dreamscape with human coder number 289 and her coworker LEGO Robot Battt with three t's. Bring your favourite words to a quick dream coding session on just your typical Wednesday afternoon.....with maybe a few glitches.....

KEIRA FORDE (CREATOR)

Keira Marie Forde is a multi-disciplinary physical performer who creates cross cultural physical work. @keira_marie

VOICE IN THE SHADOWS

Thursday, April 15th | 1:30-2:30pm EST

HopIn STAGE | Q+A | Moderator : Sehar Bhojani

Voice in the Shadows is a multi-disciplinary, digital theatre work which combines shadow puppetry, film and live performance. The story will take place in the year 2060, and revolves around a 10-year-old girl named Aisha who struggles with the ability to find her voice and discover her true self.

Passing Through Theatre (PTT) is dedicated to creating original new works that explore the intricacies of human connection, share authentic stories that are socially and politically relevant to our generation, and challenge traditional forms of theatre. @passingthroughtheatre



LILY SUTHERLAND (CO-CREATOR)

Lily Sutherland, is a writer, director, performer, and producer with over eight years of experience creating and presenting original works across Canada. She holds a B.A. in Theatre from The University of Ottawa, and has trained in Clown at École Philippe Gaulier in Paris, France. @lilsuth

WARDA "MUNA" YOUSOUF (CO-CREATOR)

Warda "Muna" Youssouf is a poet and visual artist living in Toronto. Born in Djibouti and raised in the UK, Muna is a recipient of the David Maltby Award for her exhibition Roots (2019). She has exhibited at Gallery

44, Hashtag Gallery, Ryerson Image Center, and has produced independent short films, and commercial films. @lifetastessour



WHAT WAS THAT BLEEP, CLICK, HUM?

Friday, April 16th | 1:30-2:30pm EST

HopIn SESSION | Q+A | *Moderator : Pragna Desai and Madeleine Brown*

A class of students from the future hear a mysterious sound. Join them as they journey into space to investigate in this wild, silly and thrilling multi-disciplinary play created by the inaugural members of The Warehouse Troupe ages six to twelve.

The Warehouse Troupe : Our guiding principle in the Creation Warehouse is creating work for children, with children, by children. We endeavor to put young people at the centre of our ideas and projects whether that be for workshops, theatrical pieces or multimedia art installations children are integrated into how we create and what we produce. The Creation Warehouse: Where big ideas come in small packages...

THE WAREHOUSE TROUPE

Creators/Cast:

Charlie, Age 6

Amara, Age 10

Zevon, Age 7

Gabrielle, Age 8

Aya, Age 8

Calla, Age 8

Sevan, Age 9

Frida, Age 8

Jannah, Age 7

Anisah, Age 11

Jax, Age 10

Kai, Age 7

Kid Creative Director:

Ambroise, Age 8

Dance Captain:

Amara, Age 10



THE CREATIVE ART OF BEING ©

Monday, April 12th | 3:00-5:00pm EST

HopIn SESSION

The Creative Art Being © is an expressive art based wellbeing program fostering personal growth and community development. Join us on your journey of exploration and healing.

The Creative Art of Being © activates awareness, creativity and authenticity. Self discovery is the key, unleashing your imagination wild and free. Join us for these soulful celebrations, where rhythmic movements and meditation, meet voice play and art creations. Decrease stress & release tension as you increase vitality, joy and inspiration.



ALTHEA KNIGHT (FACILITATOR)

Althea Knight was born in London, England to Jamaican parents who emigrated to Canada when she was eight. She is an artist, activist, educator, traveller and experiential facilitator whose work deals with spirituality, identity, nature, community, personal well-being and social justice. Her practice includes multi-disciplinary expression and fostering community members to explore and develop their own creative impulses through art, music, nature, walking, mindfulness, and wellness ways which helps herself and others heal; while giving voice to those who feel often unheard or unseen in one way or another.

She holds a Bachelor of Education from Concordia University, is a certified Wellness Recovery Action Plan (WRAP ®) Facilitator, a certified Mindfulness Without Borders Facilitator, and holds a Nature Ambassador designation from the Toronto Regional Conservation Authority, all of which inform her practice. Her experience in the curative power of art and play, alongside over a decade as a holistic practitioner, led to the birth of "The Creative Art of Being©" in 2007.

With over 20 years experience, locally and globally, developing and facilitating educational and experiential workshops promoting: self-care, personal growth, creative expression and mental health and wellness for children, youth and adults of diverse demographics; she is committed to helping others find what helps them feel better, in ways that work for them.

Althea has participated in group and solo shows as a visual and performance artist and has her "Art for the Soul" in private collections locally and abroad. Currently, Club Althea, the Feldenkrais Method, and learning all things clay are fueling her spirit during these Covid times.



TRIVIA NIGHT!

Friday, April 16th | 3:00-5:00pm EST

Gather.town | Hosted by : *Sehar Bhojani and Madeleine Brown*

Spark the Future! Artists and Delegates team up with artists from across Canada for a totally serious and totally silly game of trivia.





DIGITAL PRACTICES AND CURATION

Tuesday, April 13th | 3:00-5:00pm EST

HopIn STAGE | ASL | *Moderated by : Sehar Bhojani*

Workshop: Following a sold-out digital school tour of ERASER: A New Normal, join co-director Sadie Epstein-Fine and sound designer Maddie Bautista as they share their best practices and tips and tricks from creating a virtual play during the pandemic. In addition, Maddie will lead workshop participants through an exploration into the basics of Q-Lab.

Panel: What considerations are on the table for curators when seeking digital creations? What are the considerations that curators are asking artists to make during this digital shift? Join us for a discussion with three dynamic artistic leaders about their experience in curating work online, their process of dissemination and the relationships they are building with artists in the Canadian arts community along the way.



SADIE EPSTEIN-FINE (CO-FACILITATOR)

Sadie Epstein-Fine (they/them) is a second-generation queer, genderqueer, Jewish director, playwright and choreographer. They work primarily in devised, immersive and physical theatre as well as musical theatre. Sadie is particularly passionate about creating theatre for young audiences. Recent credits include: Eraser (director/choreographer/playwright, 2019 Riser Project, Dora nominations: Outstanding director, new play, production), Mamma Mia (director, Nightwood Theatre), Cleave (director, Forward March Festival, Theatre Direct), Motherload (director/dramaturg, 2018 Rhubarb Festival), SCAT (director/playwright, Laugh Serious Theatre). Currently they are creating Sugar Plum in residence with Nightwood Theatre. Sadie is the editor of Spawning Generations: Rants and Reflections on Growing Up with LGBTQ+ Parents, published by Demeter Press, which was named one of the Top 10 books of 2018 by NOW Magazine and was nominated for 2018 LAMBDA and Forward Indies Awards. They are working with The ArQuives: Canada's LGBTQ2+ Archives to create a digital queerspawn archive. Sadie is also an avid arts educator, having taught workshops in playwriting, stage combat and creation to elementary and high school students. www.sadieepsteinfine.com



MADDIE BAUTISTA (CO-FACILITATOR)

Maddie Bautista is a Bi, Saudi Arabia-born Filipinx sound designer and composer. Maddie has been nominated for a Dora Award for her music in Eraser at RISER 2019, and also nominated for the 2020 Pauline McGibbon Award. She is part of Musical Stage's and Prime Mover's 2021 NoteWorthy Cohort. Selected sound credits: OIL (ARC), bug (Theatre Passe Muraille), Wah Wah Wah (Wildside 2020), Private Eyes (lemonTree creations), Our Fathers, Sons, Lovers, and Little Brothers (b current). She is Co-Artistic Producer of Bad Muse Collective with Korean-Canadian sound designer Deanna H. Choi. Bad Muse is currently in residence with fu-GEN Theatre to create Love You Wrong Time. www.maddiebautista.com



ADRIENNE WONG (PANELIST)

Adrienne Wong is Artistic Director of SpiderWebShow Performance, a company that interrogates the impact of digital disruption through art. She co-curates the Festival of Live Digital Art (FOLDA) with Michael Wheeler and Sarah Garton Stanley. Adrienne's work straddles theatrical and digital spaces. Particular interests are in developing new work and using theatre and engagement as a strategy to promote progressive change. She was the inaugural artist in residence for CBC Radio's q. Landline (co-created with Dustin Harvey) toured nationally and internationally in French and English. Me On The Map (co-created with JD Derbyshire) continues to be adapted for young citizen designers. Adrienne lives in Treaty 7 territory (Banff, AB) with her family.



JILLIAN KEILEY (PANELIST)

Jillian Keiley is an award-winning director from St. John's, Newfoundland and founder of Artistic Fraud of Newfoundland. Jillian has directed and taught across Canada and internationally. She received her BFA in Theatre from York University and was awarded Honorary Doctorates of Letters from both Memorial University and York University. She was the winner of the Siminovitch Prize for Directing in 2004 and the Canada Council's John Hirsch Prize in 1997. Jillian assumed her role as NAC English Theatre Artistic Director in August 2012, and her productions at the NAC have included Between Breaths, The Colony of Unrequited Dreams, A Christmas Carol, Twelfth Night, Metamorphoses: Based on the Myths of Ovid, Tartuffe and Oil and Water. She also directed Bakkhai, The Diary of Anne Frank and As You Like It for the Stratford Festival, as well as The Neverending Story and Alice Through the Looking-Glass, both produced as collaborations between the Stratford Festival and the NAC. Tempting Providence, her collaboration with Robert Chafe for Theatre Newfoundland Labrador, toured internationally for 12 years and will be the inaugural production at the launch of the Nurse Myra Bennett Theatre in Cow Head, Newfoundland



RAEESA LALANI (PANELIST)

Raeesa Lalani is a young arts professional flourishing as the new Artistic Director of the Prismatic Arts Festival. With a B.A. in English and a Masters in Journalism, the arts industry called her back as a professional, as Raeesa has long been active as an actress, singer and has been known to tickle the ivories too.

Raeesa feels immensely fulfilled being part of an organization that has enabled her to grow personally in the arts but also be a part of a greater cause that continually strives to help the growth of Indigenous and culturally diverse artists.



ACCESSIBILITY IN THE DIGITAL AGE

Wednesday, April 14th | 3:00-5:00pm

HopIn STAGE | ASL

Workshop: Learn strategies for how to make digital work accessible in a one-hour workshop led by Clayton Baraniuk, Artistic Producer of Electric Company Theatre and Access Coordinator with assistance from panelists and incredible artists Rachel Marks, Ophira Calof, Sage Lovell, Irene Pollock and Matt Rawlins.

Panel: Following the workshop, hear the panelists in a conversation moderated by Clayton about how the performing arts have become more (or less) accessible amidst the pandemic and how these changes will serve the industry in the future



CLAYTON BARANIUK (FACILITATOR + MODERATOR)

Clayton Baraniuk is a theatre producer, arts administrator, Relaxed Performance consultant and access manager, living on the west coast of Canada. He received his Relaxed Performance training from Include Arts (UK) through British Council Canada's Access Activator Program, and his RP experiences include training or hands-on consultation with dozens of arts organizations including Theatre Calgary, Royal Manitoba Theatre Centre, Theatre Northwest, Buddies in Bad Times, Jo Jack et John, and National Arts Centre. Clayton has also provided access management, consultation, coordination or workshops for the Festival of Live Digital Arts (FOLDA), Canada Scene, undercurrents festival, NAC English Theatre, the Professional Association of Canadian Theatres, and Queens University Theatre Department. He has a continued passion for connecting arts and culture to audiences, working with artists, and dismantling barriers. He is also the Artistic Producer at Vancouver's Electric Company Theatre, an internationally acclaimed creation-based independent theatre company.



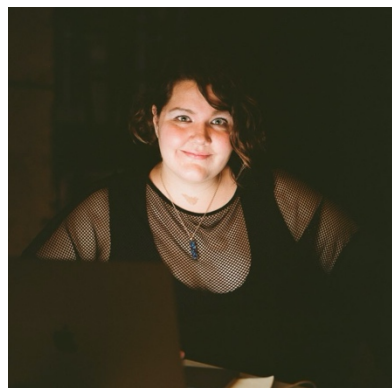
OPHIRA CALOF (PANELIST)

Ophira Calof (She/They) is a multi award winning Disabled writer, performer, and producer. Her work weaves together music, comedy, and storytelling, centring disability and chronic illness experience. They co-created the sketch comedy revue Generally Hospital (Canadian Comedy Award Nominee, Patron's Pick, David Seguin Memorial Award), and her solo show, Literally Titanium, was developed through the Buddies in Bad Times Emerging Creator's Unit before premiering at the 2020 Next Stage Theatre Festival. Ophira also works as a curator, workshop facilitator, consultant, and keynote speaker with projects including COVID-19 through a Disability Lens: Storytelling and Filmmaking Project, Making Space: Stories of Disabled Youth in the GTA, The ReelAbilities Film Festival Annual Comedy Night, and Bad Dog Theatre's 5th annual Our Cities On Our Stages Symposium.



RACHEL MARKS (PANELIST)

Rachel is, and will always be, a theatre kid at heart! After spending several years working developing programs for autistic children and their families, Rachel took this knowledge and combined it with her theatre background (stage management, administration and events) and began developing improv programs for children and youth who are neurodivergent, or are members of the disability community. Rachel works as a Relaxed Performance Consultant, working with companies like the Toronto Symphony Orchestra, Soulpepper Theatre, and the National Ballet of Canada, to welcome disabled audiences to their performances. Rachel's own artistic practice focuses on both community engaged theatre and developing sensory immersive theatre for children with disabilities. In 2018 Rachel was one of 18 artists worldwide invited to participate in the Big Umbrella Festival (the first festival of arts for children with ASD) Artist track program at the Lincoln Center (NYC) and later that year, one of 16 artists who trained under Oily Cart Theatre (London, UK) in sensory theatre for children with multiple and profound disabilities and developmental delays. Rachel is a tireless advocate for accessibility in the arts.



SAGE LOVELL (PANELIST)

Sage Lovell is a Deaf queer nonbinary genderfluid femme artist who likes to work their magic, using different art mediums to shift perspectives and spaces. Their post-secondary experience at Gallaudet University made them realize that sign language accessibility is possible! After graduating, Sage returned back to their roots and focused on advocacy for the inclusion of Deaf Canadians. Sage's work on advocacy included creative artistic approaches and found its place in the arts community. Since then, Sage has worked with various communities in several capacities, developing meaningful work that continues to evolve. With Sage's many talents, they were able to incorporate their passions of media, language, theatre, and accessibility into works of art. These multitudes of experiences led Sage to establish Deaf Spectrum. Most notable recent works include "Creative ASL Theatre Sessions," a series of online improv classes in collaboration with The Hypernovas and InsideOut Theatre. In 2020, Sage won an award from ArtEquity for their advocacy in the arts community. In 2019, Sage was a finalist for the Community Arts Award (Toronto Arts Foundation). In 2018, Sage won 2nd place Defty Award (Canadian Cultural Society of the Deaf) for their ASL poetry production of "The Four Elements." Currently, Sage is working on a project called "Deaf, what?" alongside Deaf Artist & Photographer Alice Lo to document the stories of Deaf Canadians with the support of the Canada Council of the Arts.



IRENE POLLOCK (PANELIST)

Irene Pollock is a theatre artist based in Toronto. She is a member of Sol Express, L'Arche Toronto's creative arts program, and is working with them right now online. Her favourite shows with them include Journey to the Greatest Gift, Red Nose: A Play On Words and Birds Make Me Think About Freedom. Birds toured to London, Ontario in 2019 to commemorate the tenth anniversary of the closures of institutions in Ontario. As a member of Sol Express, she has led workshops at the University of Toronto. Prior to her experience with Sol Express, Irene performed in many musicals including Grease. Irene is on staff at Coffee Shed as part of Common Grounds.



MATT RAWLINS (PANELIST)

Matt joined L'Arche Toronto in 2006 and has been involved with L'Arche Toronto Sol Express since its inception. In 2010 Matt joined Sol Express as an Artistic Assistant full time. The Sol Express Arts program focuses on creative expression and developing the skills of artists in Theatre, Dance, Storytelling, and Visual Art. The performance stream has created and presented original content including *Birds Make Me Think About Freedom* and *Red Knows: A Play on Words* for the Toronto Fringe Festival for the last 5 years, most recently online with the Toronto Fringe Collective, as all of Sol Express' programming has moved online with hopes to return to working in person. The Sol Express Visual Arts stream has had artwork exhibited in the community at galleries, cafes, and as a group participated in local art festivals including the Disabilities Arts Festival at the Art Gallery of Ontario. Matt continues to be involved with various art-based collaborations across the city including audio, visual, film, print, photography, and design work.

REDEFINING TYA : THEATRE FOR VS. BY YOUNG AUDIENCES

Thursday, April 15th | 3:00-5:00pm

HopIn STAGE | ASL | *Moderated by : Lisa Marie DiLiberto*

Workshop: Led by Theatre Direct's Creation Warehouse Director Pragna Desai and Associate Producer Madeleine Brown, the one-hour workshop will focus on facilitating artistic processes with young people in the driver's seat. Join Pragna and Madeleine as they share the strategies they use in their work to foster young people's imaginations and artistic voices.

Panel: Who does the future of TYA belong to? How does the work shift and deepen when young people are invited into the process rather than only showing up in the audience? We invite you into a conversation about the insights, advantages and experiences that are possible when young people are given the opportunity to create alongside artists in the community.



MADELEINE BROWN (CO-FACILITATOR)

Madeleine Brown is an award-winning Toronto-based playwright and actor who grew up between Peterborough, Ontario and Edinburgh, Scotland. Her last three comedies debuted at the Toronto Fringe Festival including a sold-out run of Patron's Pick winner, *Everyone Wants A T-Shirt!*. She has previously received NOW Magazine Awards for Outstanding Ensemble and Individual Performance, is an alumna of the Loran Award, Canada's top undergraduate scholarship, and was an inaugural Nightwood Theatre Young Innovator. In January 2020, she was named one of two recipients of The Ellen Ross Stuart "Opening Doors" Award. Madeleine volunteers with L'Arche Toronto's Sol Express, a performance troupe for adults with intellectual disabilities, and plays euphonium in the Swansea Community Concert Band. Training: University of Toronto Mississauga, Sheridan College, Theatre Gargantua (Artistic Mentorship Program), Mermaid Theatre (Animotion Program) and The Second City Training Centre (Conservatory and Writing Programs).



PRAGNA DESAI (CO-FACILITATOR)

Pragna is a Dora-nominated actor, director, musician, theatre creator, and artist-educator. Pragna has performed with RMTC, YPT, CanStage, Pleiades Theatre, Eastern Front Theatre, Prairie Theatre Exchange, Theatre Smith-Glimour, and the Stratford Festival, where she was awarded the Jean A. Chalmers Award for dedication to Canadian theatre. She has guest-starred in numerous tv series and films with Warner Bros., Paramount Studios, and the CBC, working with renowned directors John Wells, Deepa Mehta and Phil Alden Robinson. She was Artistic Director of Théâtre Buissonnier, a company that created original theatre with children, directly involving them in new play development. She was Artistic Director of Crescendo Music, a children's music and theatre company in North Africa, with whom she designed three musical puppet shows, La Chenille, La Princesse et Le Crapaud, and The Musical Pinacosaurus, and launched the Crescendo Band. Pragna works extensively as an artist-educator, and was honoured to have been a guest professor at the Académie Royale du Maroc, where she taught His Royal Highness Moulay Hassan, Crown Prince of Morocco. Pragna holds a BA in Music from Wilfrid Laurier University, is a graduate of George Brown Theatre School, and alumna of the Royal Conservatory of Music. Closest to her heart, Pragna is the proud mom of a rascally little boy.



LISA MARIE DILIBERTO (MODERATOR)

Before joining Theatre Direct, Lisa Marie worked as an independent creator and performer in regional theatres across the country including 4th Line Theatre, The Sudbury Theatre Centre, Carousel Players and Second City in Toronto. She is the founding Artistic Director of FIXT POINT Arts and Media and the co-creator of The Tale of a Town – Canada, a multi-year theatre and media project that has toured to every province and territory. Inspired by stories from The Tale of a Town, Lisa Marie co-created and directed the first season of Main Street Ontario an animated series now airing its second season on TVO. Past posts include Playwright-in-Residence at Theatre Passe Muraille, Associate Artistic Director at Jumbies Theatre, and Education & Audience Development Coordinator at Canadian Stage. Lisa Marie is on faculty at Centennial College where she teaches Clown and Acting and she holds a Masters of Arts in Theatre and Performance Studies from York University and is currently pursuing her PhD. She is an Artistic Advisor for the National Arts Centre of Canada, a graduate of George Brown Theatre School and École Philippe Gaulier in Paris, France. Lisa Marie is an advocate for artist caregivers, a Dora-nominated director, and the proud mom of two wild children.



ELENA (OR ELI) BELYEA (PANELIST)

ELENA (OR ELI) BELYEA (they/she) is an award-winning queer playwright, performer, producer, and arts educator from Amiskwaciwâskahikan (colonially known as Edmonton) whose plays have been produced across the country. They've performed in 500-seat regional theatres, former roller-rinks, and 1-car garages from Wells, BC to Halifax, NS. She's a graduate of the University of Alberta and the National Theatre School of Canada (Playwriting) and is usually the shortest guy in the room (4'11). They're also one half of queer sketch duo "Gender? I Hardly Know Them". More at elenabelyea.com / @belyeache + @genderihardlyknowthem

(Photo credit: Mike Tan + Make-up credit: The Raven Virginia)!



PABLO FELICES-LUNA (PANELIST)

Pablo Felices-Luna was born and raised in Peru, and came to Canada more than 30 years ago to pursue a career in theatre. He has been the Artistic Director of Manitoba Theatre for Young People since 2014, where he has supported the creation of new works by this beloved organization and shared outstanding work by guest companies from across Canada and the world. Prior to coming to Winnipeg, he was the Artistic Director of Carousel Players for 8 years, where he directed 15 productions and worked with 9 different playwrights to premiere 7 new plays. Pablo and his wife Carrie are partners in the adventure of raising their audacious daughters Emma, Alejandra and Isabel.



PIERRE SIMPSON (PANELIST)

Pierre Simpson (he,him,il,lui). A Welland, ON native and graduate of University of Ottawa's bilingual Department of Theatre, Pierre has acted as coordinator and dramaturgical support for Théâtre français de Toronto's Les Zinspiré.e.s teen writing contest since its inception in 2011. Pierre's directing credits include Les Zinspirés 1, 2.0, 3D (TfT, Pauline McGibbon, John Hirsch, and Dora nominations), La plus grosse poutine du monde (Vox, Catapulte) and staged readings of his French adaptation of Paul Dunn's Outside. He has been on stage in La Cantatrice chauve, Dom Juan, Le Dîner de cons, Les Médecins de Molière (TfT, Rideau Award, Dora nomination), When it Rains (2b, Edinburgh, Mumbai), A Midsummer Night's Dream (Canadian Stage), Strawberries in January (GCTC), The Bookshop (NAC), and on screen in Québexit, Darren Aronofsky's mother!, The Detectives, Murdoch Mysteries (CBC), Noël en boîte (Unis), La Malédiction de Jonathan Plourde (Illico) and Mehdi & Val (SRC, Gémeaux nomination).



TIJANA SPASIC (PANELIST)

Tijana Spasic is a Toronto-based theatre creator, director, producer and installation artist. She is currently the Interim Artistic Director of Arts4All, working in close collaboration with a team of five other artistic staff (Karis Jones-Pard, Ximena Huizi, Liza Konovalov, Monica Olvera, Tuyaara Fedorova) and many other community members and guest artists. She is also an associate artist with Jumblies Theatre. She has led several large-scale community engaged arts projects, in parks, schools, libraries, and other site-specific and traditional venues and has worked with Mammalian Diving Reflex, The Milkweed Collective and bcurrent Theatre and created projects for: The Edinburgh Fringe Festival, The Powerplant Gallery, Nuit Blanche and The Luminato Festival among others. She co-ran the Mashed Collective for three years, and The Living Room Festival. She enjoys working in public space and with communities, working with young people in a peer to peer relationship, and collective devising in all its forms. Many of her projects explore the city's economic disparity, the suburban-downtown divide and questions of belonging, home and memory. She speaks Serbian and Russian.

THANK YOU

Daniela Booth
Grace Lin
Katherine Teed-Arthur
Kevin Matthew Wong
Miwa Matreyek

Noah Glazer
Pepe Perabeles Esqueda
Rebekka Gondosch
Romy Rahman
Sameer Vohra

Samoil Vohra
Shanice Bowrin
Sonia Hussain
Teagan Vincent

FESTIVAL DELEGATES

Alex Franks
April Leung
Hin Hilary Leung
Laura Reznec
Sophie Dow

SPONSORS



THEATRE DIRECT STAFF

Artistic Director	Lisa Marie DiLiberto
Managing Producer	Kate Walker
Assoc. Artistic Director	Sehar Bhojani
Warehouse Troupe Dir.	Pragna Desai
Associate Producer	Madeleine Brown
Balancing Act Producer	Susie Burpee
Associate Artist	Shira Leuchter
Associate Artist	Djennie Laguerre

CONTACT

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For technical questions, especially regarding HopIn:

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