

ALBERTA THEATRE PROJECTS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

ALBERTA THEATRE PROJECTS BRINGS ARTS CLUB THEATRE COMPANY'S HIT PRODUCTION OF COMEDY *THE BIRDS AND THE BEES* TO CALGARY

CALGARY, April 29, 2024 – This May, [Alberta Theatre Projects](#) (ATP) is thrilled to present the Arts Club Theatre Company production of [The Birds and the Bees](#) by Mark Crawford, directed by Lauren Taylor. Just in time for warmer weather, budding leaves and blossoming flowers, *The Birds and the Bees* is the perfect comedy to usher in the Springtime.

Sarah, a turkey farmer, has just left her husband and moved back home to live with her mom Gail. Despite the fact that she's a divorcée of twenty years herself, Gail isn't exactly providing the sympathy Sarah needs. Gail's a beekeeper and she has other things to worry about—like why her honeybees are dropping dead.

Then there's Earl: Gail's neighbour, farm tenant, and the ex-husband of Gail's ex-husband's new wife. In these past twenty years, he's been keeping himself mighty busy with the ladies, but Gail has just never really got back on that horse... so to speak. And finally, there's Ben: an athletic 23-year-old Master's student, here to study the collapsing bee colonies. Secretly still a virgin, he's about to get a big lesson in pollination... if you know what we mean.

Set in two adjoining bedrooms on a modern Canadian farm, the play tackles sex, love, science, family, and... the artificial insemination of turkeys? "Satisfying on every level," (Sudbury Star) *The Birds and the Bees* is a laugh-out-loud comedy with brains and a huge, honeyed heart.

"For the characters in this play things don't always work out, but something else happens instead, that offers the chance for change and growth," says the show's director Lauren Taylor. "We follow them trying and failing, attempting connection but often unable to get past their self-imposed walls."

"Through comedy," adds Taylor, "We connect with laughter, joy, forgiveness, and release. Through embracing ourselves as natural beings of expression, we open up to more joy, more love."

The Arts Club Theatre Company's production of the play was an audience favourite when it hit the Granville Island Stage in 2019. The Vancouver Sun said, "*The Birds and the Bees* had the Arts Club audience screaming with laughter and applauding enthusiastically... delivering both the conventionally comic and the exceptionally rare, it's an ending that deserves its cheers."

The Arts Club then toured this production through BC in October and November of 2023, and will be bringing it over the provincial border to ATP from May 7 – 25.

This is not the first Arts Club production ATP has brought to Calgary audiences. The wildly popular production of Ins Choi's hit play *Kim's Convenience* in ATP's 2021-22 Season was also a production brought in from the Arts Club.

"This partnership is an exciting opportunity to unite with another reputable Canadian theatre company once again, merging our dedication to storytelling," says ATP Artistic Director Haysam Kadri. "We are sincerely grateful for the chance to collaborate with the Arts Club, and we are confident that this partnership will elevate the theatre experience for our audiences."

The Birds and the Bees is written by Canadian playwright, Mark Crawford. Crawford also wrote the hilarious, *The New Canadian Curling Club*, which enjoyed a smash-hit production at ATP in the Spring of 2019, becoming one of the best-selling non-holiday shows in the company's history. *The Birds and the Bees* promises even more non-stop hilarity and hijinks, with "an emotional depth few other comedies can claim." (London Free Press)

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“We are thrilled to welcome Mark back to our stage and to present another of his heartfelt and hilarious plays to our audiences,” adds Kadri

ATP fans may also remember Crawford’s work from when his new play, *The Gig* was a highlight of the online staged reading series, Playwrights Projects (in 2021). *The Gig* has since had its full premiere at Hamilton, Ontario’s Theatre Aquarius (in 2023).

***The Birds and the Bees* runs from May 7 – May 25, 2024 at the Martha Cohen Theatre at Arts Commons. Tickets are available now at albertatheatreprojects.com.**

The Birds and the Bees

Written by Mark Crawford

Directed by Lauren Taylor

An Arts Club Theatre Production

Presented by Alberta Theatre Projects

Cast (Alphabetical):

Riley Hardwick – Ben

Arghavan Jenati – Sarah

Nancy Kerr – Gail

Gerry Mackay – Earl

Creative Team:

Mark Crawford – Playwright

Lauren Taylor – Director

Michelle Thorne-Speir – Intimacy Director

Ted Roberts – Set Designer

Alaia Hamer – Costume Designer

Michael Hewitt – Lighting Designer

Sammie Hutch – Sound Designer

Katherine Matlashewski – Assistant Director

Lisa Russell – Stage Manager

Chandler Ontkean – Assistant Stage Manager

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For media inquiries, please contact:

Kara Sturk

Marketing & Communications Coordinator

Email: ksturk@atplive.com

Phone: 587-441-9489

About Alberta Theatre Projects:

Alberta Theatre Projects has been a cornerstone of Calgary’s arts community for five decades, showcasing the best in live theatre and fostering a vibrant cultural hub for audiences of all ages. With a commitment to artistic excellence and community engagement, ATP continues to inspire, entertain, and enrich the lives of theatregoers across the region.

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