

# ALBERTA THEATRE PROJECTS

For Immediate Release:

## **Alberta Theatre Projects presents Playwrights Projects 2021 – a series of live virtual readings of new Canadian plays in development**

**CALGARY, March 16, 2021** – Alberta Theatre Projects is thrilled to announce Playwrights Projects 2021, a series of seven online workshop readings of new Canadian plays by members of the Alberta Theatre Projects Playwrights Unit. These virtual readings will take place Friday evenings from April 16 to May 28 and offer a unique opportunity to see the process of creating a new play.

“Playwrights Projects 2021 brings some of the brightest, creative, and most engaging playwrights from across the country,” said Haysam Kadri, Interim Artistic Director. “The focus this year has been on ‘BIG IDEAS’ and we are so proud to have found a way to support our storytellers during this great time of uncertainty. It is essential for Alberta Theatre Projects to continue the commitment to new works by investing in people of all backgrounds to voice stories through theatre, inspiring personal growth and creating meaningful community connections.”

Facilitated by Trevor Rueger, who is also the Executive Director of the Alberta Playwrights’ Network, the Alberta Theatre Projects Playwrights Unit has been meeting virtually all season to collaborate and create. Playwrights Projects 2021 is an opportunity for members to present their new works, which are all in different stages of development.

### **April 16: *Ten* by Jason Maghanoy**

Mira is beautiful. Palestinian. A PHD in clinical psychology and one of the most famous political commentators in the country. *Ten* follows Mira as she navigates her way through today's explosive political landscape, with each scene being a different "rule for life." Mira celebrates human beings: Our complexities, flaws and contradictions. And she believes that our existence can't possibly be politically correct.

When she is invited to give a live interview on one of the largest social media platforms in the world she receives a death threat warning her about appearing... that there will be consequences. *Ten* follows the aftermath of the interview and examines the relationships that inform her controversial views on men, women, power and the future of our culture.

### **April 23: *Area 33* by Natalie Meisner**

Chloe lost her mother to addiction and has since been raised by her Uncle who, recognizing her talent with numbers and computers, has involved her in increasingly dodgy aspects of his business as a buyer and seller of lobsters. This has made her something of a pariah in the village. It isn't unusual for her to be “buzzed” by pick-up trucks as she walks along the road. One such day, short on hope for the future and doubtful about the existence of intelligent life on earth, she steps into a local joke: The Shag Harbour UFO museum. The curator, Evelyn is like no other adult she knows. She does not offer counselling or advice. She is not even particularly pleasant. Perhaps for this reason they become friends. But Evelyn herself has a secret: She is an undercover officer working with the Department of Fisheries and Oceans to investigate fraudulent seafood sales.

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*Area 33* is about trust, lobsters and the search for signs of intelligent life one summer at the Shag Harbour UFO Museum.

## **April 30: *Strife* by Matthew MacKenzie**

Matthew MacKenzie's *Strife* will feature five indigenous artists reading excerpts from this script in development. This is an inside look at the process of how an idea is translated into a play, and how a new story is created.

## **May 7: *The Gig* by Mark Crawford**

Three drag queens have been hired to perform at a private function. The catch? Tonight's event is a campaign fundraiser for a Conservative politician. As the queens struggle to agree on how to proceed, the campaign manager and rookie candidate attempt to send a message of inclusivity and hope to their voters. Throw in an unimpressed venue technician and a long-standing MP who's been forced into retirement and honey, this gig will have you gagging. Politics! Sibling rivalry! Wigs! *The Gig* is a contemporary comedy that asks: what do we do when we don't see eye-to-eye?

## **May 14: *Go for Gold, Audrey Pham* by Camille Pavlenko**

It's 1988. Perms are in, Tab is out, and Calgary hosts the winter Olympics. Audrey Pham represents Canada in the ultimate glam sport of Ski Ballet. Unfortunately for Audrey, the athletes village was not built large enough to accommodate everyone and she is billeted at the hands of a generous, sport-loving soul: Birchwoman; the notorious wicked witch of West Kensington. Can Audrey keep up her rigorous training schedule while having to navigate the hoarders-esque paradise of "BIRCHWOMAN'S: fine hippie emporium and curiosity shop" on her once in a lifetime quest for the Gold?

## **May 21: *What's Your Deal?* by Andrea Scott**

Winsome is a Black woman in her forties living in small-town Ontario. One year ago, her young son went missing. Within the town and community, there has been an ongoing search for the missing boy. That is until a famous gameshow host, also from that community, passes away. Upon returning home from grief counselling one day, she notices all the posters for her missing son are being replaced with posters for a fundraiser for the colon cancer society – in the name of the deceased game show host.

*What's Your Deal?* explores grief, race in a small town, and ultimately the value of a human life.

## **May 28 – *Ai Yah! Chop Suey* by Dale Lee Kwong**

Jade Wong accepts a ticket for a free, all-inclusive cruise. She doesn't realize it's a lesbian cruise, or that her cabin mate is a lesbian she has a crush on. Find out what else Jade discovers on board, and about herself when she is forced to face the facts of her sexual orientation. Jade's journey continues when she is forced out of the closet to her traditional Chinese-Canadian parents during Chinese New Year. What is thicker, love or soy sauce? Don't miss this coming out comedy with a cultural twist, *Ai Yah! Chop Suey*.

Tickets are only \$10 per workshop reading, or all seven can be purchased for \$50. Alberta Theatre Projects and Deane House have teamed up again to create a special at-home dinner and a show experience by pairing each evening with a three-course meal with sommelier-selected wine.

Tickets and meal packages for Playwrights Projects 2021 are available at <https://albertatheatreprojects.com/whats-on/playwrights-projects-2021/>.

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**About Alberta Theatre Projects:**

We create world-class contemporary theatre in Calgary from our home in the Martha Cohen Theatre. We are a national leader in new play development. Programming is selected from the finest Canadian and international plays driven by the collision of diverging ideas, points of view, class, gender or cultural perspectives. Our productions radically explore our space, blurring the line between the audience and the artist through multiple seating configurations each season.

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