

ALBERTA THEATRE PROJECTS

For Immediate Release:

Alberta Theatre Projects presents Playwrights Projects 2022 – their second virtual offering of live readings from new Canadian plays in development

CALGARY, March 30, 2022 – Following its successful 2021 offering of online workshop readings, Alberta Theatre Projects is proud to announce Playwrights Projects 2022 – a series of live virtual presentations of new plays written by Canadian storytellers.

Designed to nurture unique voices, the Playwrights Unit allows both emerging and established artists to have the support necessary to develop new work from an idea to a first draft. Members have met over video conference calls for eight months, exploring new perspectives and developing their projects. Alberta Theatre Projects acts as both an advocate and a home for storytellers throughout this process, providing flexible and responsive dramaturgical support to feed the development process. Excerpts of these new plays will be presented as the Playwrights Projects - six online readings by professional performing artists presented over five Friday nights starting April 29, 2022.

"While these uncertain times during the pandemic have created many challenges for the performing arts, it has also offered exciting possibilities for us to learn and innovate as an organization. One such positive has been the ability to engage both artists and audiences from afar by continuing to offer access to our Playwrights Projects on an online platform," says Rohit Chokhani, Artistic and Executive Director. "ATP is known nationally for incubating new works. We are so proud to have been able to offer the opportunity to these storytellers to develop new works during the pandemic. The online platform will allow for a reading of their scripts in progress to reach people from all over Canada – and the world. Audiences will have the opportunity to witness these remarkable early versions of new works from the comfort of their own homes, growing virtual arts communities in new and meaningful ways."

Playwrights Project 2022 is once again facilitated by Trevor Rueger, the Executive Director of the Alberta Playwrights' Network. Rueger oversaw this year's formal selection committee, which received over 40 pitches submitted for consideration from local and national storytellers interested in participating. This year's selection committee included Glynis Leyshon, Valerie Planche, and Mike Tan, with input from former ATP Interim Artistic Director Haysam Kadri.

"The process is both aspirational and inspirational, a unique opportunity to collaborate and create," says Rueger. "It's a dedicated space to process ideas in various stages of development. Emerging and established theatre artists receive the opportunity to write in a supportive environment. The hope is that they come out of the process with a draft of a new work, potentially going on to further development, and may even one day be presented onstage."

The Alberta Theatre Projects' 2022 Playwrights include **Makram Ayache, Alixandra Cowman and Kodie Rollan, Alexandria Rose Fortier, Breton Lalama, Allison Lynch, Rose Napoli**. They come to the virtual table with unique voices, interests and backgrounds. Their writing experiences range from award-winning published playwrights to first-time script creators.

Playwrights Projects runs every **Friday between April 29 – May 27**.

The schedule and synopses of the online readings are as follows:

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***INNOCENTS* by Rose Napoli - April 29 at 7:30 pm**

It's Raf's first day in the security department of the art gallery. Interim Security Manager Louis is ready to be a lean, mean training machine. But when seven children faint in the same spot in the same gallery room, all within twenty minutes of one another, this unlikely security duo becomes a kind of Sherlock and Watson to solve the mystery. Based on true events.

***HAVE YOU SEEN MY SISTER* by Alexandria Rose Fortier - May 6 at 7:30 pm**

There are many things that take a lifetime to understand. At simply eight years old, Molly Sullivan is faced with an event so large that it will change the entire world as she knows it, and nothing will ever be the same. After all, how do you tell an eight-year-old the brutal and devastating statistics of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women in Canada? And how do you have them understand that it only applies to their sister, not them? Follow along as twenty years of questions, frustration, and heartache are explored in the tangled web of race and injustice.

***LITTLE ELVES Book & Lyrics* by Kodie Rollan, Music & Lyrics by Alixandra Cowman - May 13 at 7:30 pm**

A new musical inspired by the story of St. Nicholas and the Evil Butcher. After escaping from the clutches of a Butcher who kidnapped them, three young girls conspire to find a way to escape a town that is not so welcoming to them. A reimagining of a folk tale gone wrong, we are brought into a world of lies, deceit, and desperation. When the chips are stacked against you, what will you do to survive?

***YOU WAKE UP ON STAGE* by Breton Lalama - May 20 at 7:30 pm**

A transmasculine person wakes up on stage, with no idea of how they got there, and has to figure out not only why they are there, but if they can get out. Through puppetry, stand-up, physical theatre and more, the show explores the sometimes hilarious, sometimes disturbing ways we perform gender for each other.

***PRETTY/CRAZY GIRL* by Allison Lynch - May 27 at 7:30 pm**

PRETTY/CRAZY GIRL is a one-woman immersive sound experience that asks the question, *why aren't women believed?* Inspired by the true story of investigative journalist Nelly Bly and the ten days and nights she spent undercover as a patient at Blackwell's Island Asylum in 1887, *PRETTY/CRAZY GIRL* examines the "hysterical woman" archetype reveals dark truths about the historical diagnosis of so-called "insanity" and asks us to examine *how* and *when* we truly listen.

***JERICHO* by Makram Ayache - May 27 at 7:30 pm**

Jericho is a nearly forgotten mall at the edge of New City. When police are called in to evacuate the basement parkade of a tent city of the unhoused, a young woman's, one of the houseless, protest video goes viral. This lightning rod brings thousands upon thousands to the mall in a political demonstration against a capitalist ruling elite. However, the protest is haphazard. Teenagers from a local high school fill their time perusing and playing at the mall. A group of activists organize against the retaliations in the protest. A white working-class family witnesses the protest increase in size, extending onto their farm. And the young woman from the viral video garners a strange following where she takes on the title of a Prophet.

To meet the playwrights and read their bios, please visit:

<https://albertatheatreprojects.com/artists/playwrights-unit/>

Tickets are now available on Alberta Theatre Projects' website:

<https://albertatheatreprojects.com/whats-on/playwrights-projects-2022/>

\$10.00 per night or \$40.00 Showpass for all five nights, which includes a free ticket to ATP's virtual reading of Student Writers Group Showcase, happening Saturday, May 14.

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For media inquiries, please contact:

Jennifer Merio

Cell: 403-700-9839

jmerio@atplive.com

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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