

ALBERTA THEATRE PROJECTS

For Immediate Release:

Alberta Theatre Projects announces a bold, magical and provocative season, with their entertaining 2022-23 lineup of shows

CALGARY, June 28, 2022 – Alberta Theatre Projects is thrilled to announce the first season programmed by Artistic and Executive Director Rohit Chokhani, who was appointed to the leadership position in October of 2021. It is a season that reflects ATP's intention to be the creators, curators and presenters of stories told by many unique voices that promise to provoke as much as they entertain. The upcoming season of five plays includes three World Premieres, an International script never before produced in Calgary, and a Governor-General Award-nominated production performed for the first time in Alberta.

"This season is a balancing of energies," says Chokhani. "There is the energy of finally being able to share shows put on hold during the pandemic, mixed with the reveal of new Canadian works and an international sensation. It represents the energy of who we are as a company today, and the kind of programming you can expect from ATP moving forward. We are proud to say that this season reflects where ATP has come from, and where we are going in the years ahead. A season that promises to break down the barriers to theatre, and increase accessibility through stories and narratives that feature the diverse demographics of Alberta. It offers opportunities for artists with unique perspectives, and features a broad range of characters not frequently seen on Canadian mainstages."

The season starts with a familiar title, as it was programmed for the 2019-20 Season, the World Premiere of *Cowgirl Up*. Written by Anna Chatterton, co-created with Meg Braem and Christine Brubaker, the script was incubated and workshopped at ATP. It features three cowgirl goddesses lamenting that it's a cowboy's world, and that the heroines of rodeos past are all but forgotten. The goddesses decide to use their considerable supernatural powers to give rise to a cowgirl revolution. When they discover Cassidy Clark, they know they have found the barrel racer poised to lead their cause, and offer her all the gifts she will need to earn her first buckle at the Canadian Finals Rodeo championship. We follow Cassidy as she rises to the top of the circuit, wrestles with her newfound fame, and just how far she will push herself and her trusty mare Starbright in pursuit of their dream.

ATP's family-friendly holiday offering will continue the tradition of sharing familiar stories, reimagined in a whole new way. *The Jungle Book*, based on the books of Rudyard Kipling, and adapted by Rohit Chokhani, will offer audiences an escape into the jungles of India with this vibrant reimagining of the legend of the boy raised by wild animals. When a confrontation with a dangerous tiger isolates Mowgli, he is forced to confront the truth: is he a man-cub or a human? Caught between two worlds, with the support of his friends, Mowgli must search for his sense of self in a quest to discover where he truly belongs. Experience this timeless fable where a cast of familiar characters comes to life through puppetry, stylized props, masks and movement. Exploring themes of courage, identity, and seeking to understand our place in the world – *The Jungle Book's* coming-of-age story is as relevant today as it was when the stories were originally written.

The third show, and first of 2023, ATP presents our third World Premiere, *The F Word*, co-created and performed by Keshia Cheesman & Bianca Miranda, presented by Alberta Theatre Projects, a Downstage production in association with Theatre Calgary. This hilarious and heartfelt production boldly confronts the word FAT, as it reflects society's instruction to deflect, avoid and distance ourselves from the word. Keshia and Bianca are in the midst of a revolution to unearth the deeply ingrained shame, blame and fear associated with fatness. Fairytales, lectures, dance, and song are infused with wild whimsy as two fat women explore their friendship on a journey to self-acceptance and fat liberation.

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Next is a reimagined production of *Bombay Black* by Anosh Irani, the award-winning show that took Vancouver by storm, and was picked by the Georgia Straight amongst the 20 best shows on Vancouver stages in 2017. Set in present-day India, *Bombay Black* is a powerful love story of vengeance, betrayal, and seduction. Funny, violent and humane, the story explores the question: Why would a blind man visit an exotic dancer? Apsara resides in Bombay with her mother Padma, making a living by selling erotic dances to wealthy men. When Kamal, a blind man, arrives for an appointment, the lives of Apsara and her embittered mother are altered as their complex and brutal past rises to the surface. Mythic, brave and featuring a remarkable poetic text, bold theatrical imagery and contemporary Bombay bar dancing, *Bombay Black* is a thought-provoking work by one of Canada's leading playwriting voices.

To close the 2022-23 season, the long-awaited presentation of another show delayed due to the pandemic, *Teenage Dick* by Mike Lew. The high-stakes tragedy and political drama of Shakespeare's *Richard III* is transported to the hallways of a contemporary high school in this darkly comedic adaptation. Richard, or "Dick" as his nemesis labels him, is bullied because of his disability, and is determined to have his revenge. He plots a ruthless path to power in a dramatic student council election. Aided by his quick-witted best friend Buck, Richard seeks to overthrow the bullish star quarterback Eddie to become student council president while charming the most popular girl in school. But as Richard falls deeper into a pattern of manipulation and greed, he is faced with an unexpected choice: Is it better to be feared or loved?

Show Billings and Dates

COWGIRL UP - October 18 – 30, 2022

Written by Anna Chatterton, co-created with Meg Braem and Christine Brubaker

Directed by Christine Brubaker

World Premiere, New Canadian Play, presented on the Martha Cohen Theatre's Thrust Stage

THE JUNGLE BOOK - November 29 – December 31, 2022, Family Holiday Show

Adapted and Directed by Rohit Chokhani

Based on the books of Rudyard Kipling

World Premiere, New Canadian Play, presented on the Martha Cohen Theatre's Thrust Stage

THE F WORD - February 9 - 19, 2023

Co-created and performed by Keshia Cheesman & Bianca Miranda

Directed by Donna-Michelle St. Bernard

Presented by Alberta Theatre Projects

A Downstage production in association with Theatre Calgary

World Premiere, New Canadian Play, presented on the Martha Cohen Theatre's Proscenium Stage

BOMBAY BLACK - March 7 - 19, 2023

Written by Anosh Irani

Directed by Rohit Chokhani

Calgary Premiere presented on the Martha Cohen Theatre's Cabaret Stage

TEENAGE DICK - April 18 – 30, 2023

Written by Mike Lew

Directed by TBD

In association with the Shakespeare Company and Hit & Myth Productions

Calgary Premiere presented on the Martha Cohen Theatre's Proscenium Stage

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Alberta Theatre Projects On Tour

Alberta Theatre Projects is thrilled to announce an exciting new pilot touring initiative, which will see us introduce two home-grown productions, commissioned by and premiered at ATP during our 2021-22 season to theatre houses across Canada and beyond!

In Wonderland - Written by Anna Cumber

In this ambitious and contemporary retelling of Lewis Carroll's classic novels, *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* and *Through the Looking Glass*, three actors fantastically portray the story's iconic characters, transforming right before audience's eyes. *In Wonderland* had its world premiere in December 2022, and was commissioned and developed by Alberta Theatre Projects. It toured to Gateway Theatre in Richmond, B.C, in early 2022.

Undressed - Written and performed by Louise Casemore

This hilarious, heartfelt solo show, written and performed by dynamic Alberta theatre artist Louise Casemore, explores a simple but confounding question: What do you do with a used wedding dress? *Undressed* was a World Premiere, commissioned and developed by Alberta Theatre Projects. The Playwrights Guild of Canada recently chose it among its Surefire 2022 list. SureFire is modelled after the American Kilroys (who compile annual lists of un- or under-produced plays by women, trans, and non-binary creators).

For more billing information and details about Alberta Theatre Projects' upcoming season, and update about our touring initiatives, please visit <https://albertatheatreprojects.com/whats-on/2022-23-season/>

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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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