

ALBERTA THEATRE PROJECTS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

ALBERTA THEATRE PROJECTS CLOSE 2022-23 SEASON WITH 'TEENAGE DICK' APRIL 18TH –30TH

The production written by Mike Lew and directed by Jenna Rodgers is a full circle moment for the company, stars newcomer Dylan Thomas-Bouchier

CALGARY, April 5, 2023 – Today, [Alberta Theatre Projects](https://albertatheatreprojects.com) announces the final production of the 2022-2023 season with the much-anticipated adaptation of Shakespeare's *Richard III*, ***Teenage Dick*** written by playwright Mike Lew. Originally programmed by the late Darcy Evans for fall 2020, this year's show will be a full circle moment for Jenna Rodgers, who Evans brought on to direct *Actually* for ATP just before the pandemic in 2020. Making his ATP ensemble lead debut is the young Cree/Dene disabled actor, Dylan Thomas-Bouchier as Richard, the titular "Dick". The long-awaited production will finally be hitting the Martha Cohen Theatre stage April 18th–30th and will champion accessibility throughout the run with two performers identifying as disabled.

"We are immensely proud to open the curtain on *Teenage Dick* after three years," says Jenna Rodgers, Director of *Teenage Dick*. "I think it will be an emotional close to the Alberta Theatre Projects season. It's a testament to Darcy's savvy programming that this production has made it through the 'pandemic pause', and I hope that we do him proud out there. This show is an opportunity for audiences to laugh – I mean really laugh – as we showcase a talented cast of young, local performers. It also allows us a valuable opportunity to broaden and redefine what it means to be accessible – something that's more necessary than ever in the wake of the pandemic."

In this darkly comedic adaptation, the high-stakes tragedy and political drama of Shakespeare's *Richard III* are transported to the hallways of a contemporary high school. Richard, or "Dick" as his nemesis calls him, is bullied because of his cerebral palsy, and is determined to have his revenge. He plots a ruthless path to power via the 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. 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?

Commissioned and developed by The Apothetae, a New York theatre company "dedicated to the production of works that explore and illuminate the, 'Disabled Experience.'" (The Apothetae website), *Teenage Dick* has enjoyed runs at Ma-Yi at the Public (New York), Donmar Warehouse (London, UK), Woolly Mammoth (Washington, D.C.), and Arts Club (Vancouver), just to name a few. The show was a New York Times Critic's Pick in 2018, with critic Jesse Green calling the play "... exhilarating. It suggests how much richer the theatre will be when it is truly open to artists of all kinds. Not just because those artists deserve employment but also because the canon of classics deserves reimagining to match our world."

Alberta Theatre Projects' production of *Teenage Dick* also marks a return of collaboration with The Shakespeare Company and Hit & Myth Productions. These companies last joined forces for the 2018 production of Tom Stoppard's famous absurdist tragi-comedy, *Rosencrantz & Guildenstern Are Dead*, the production receiving 6 Betty Mitchell Award nominations.

Calgarian Jenna Rodgers directs *Teenage Dick*, and the Alberta-based cast includes Dylan Thomas-Bouchier (Richard Gloucester), Anna Cummer (Elizabeth York), Riki Entz (Buck Buckingham), Todd Houseman (Eddie Ivy), Emily Howard (Clarissa Duke), and Isabella Pedersen (Anne Margaret).

Teenage Dick runs from April 18 – 30 at the Martha Cohen Theatre in Arts Commons. Tickets at albertatheatreprojects.com.

Audience Advisory: Contains coarse language, ableist slurs, and discussions and depictions of bullying, violence, teen pregnancy, abortion, and suicide. This production includes theatrical haze and fog. Suggested for ages 14+.

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Written by Mike Lew

Directed by Jenna Rodgers

In association with The Shakespeare Company and Hit & Myth Productions

Cast (in order of appearance):

Dylan Thomas-Bouchier: Richard Gloucester

Riki Entz: Buck Buckingham

Anna Cummer: Elizabeth York

Todd Houseman: Eddie Ivy

Emily Howard: Clarissa Duke

Isabella Pedersen: Anne Margaret

Creative Team:

Playwright: Mike Lew

Director: Jenna Rodgers

Assistant Director: Kristen Padayas

Choreographer: Tania Alvarado

Fight Director, Intimacy Director: Brianna Johnston

Set Design: Hanne Loosen

Costume Design: Ralamy Kneeshaw

Lighting Design: Ajay Badoni

Sound Design: Peter Moller

Stage Manager: Donna Sharpe

Assistant Stage Manager: Ashley Rees

Apprentice Stage Manager: Eden Middleton

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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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