



2022 GROUNDSWELL FESTIVAL

NOVEMBER 21–25, 2022

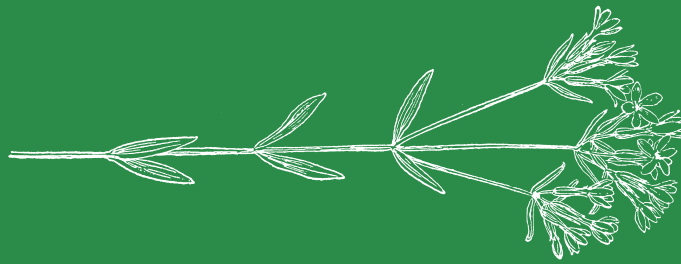
A FESTIVAL OF NEW PLAYS FROM THE 2021/22

WRITE FROM THE HIP PLAYWRIGHTS:

Omolola Ajao, Stephanie Fung, Juliet Jones-Rodney,
Merlin Simard and Jillian Welsh

Program Director: Donna-Michelle St. Bernard

Program Associate: Max Cameron Fearon



LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

In the spirit and intent of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's recommendations, Nightwood Theatre acknowledges the land on which our work is created and where our offices are located is the traditional territory of many Nations, including the Mississaugas of the Credit, the Anishnabeg, the Chippewa, the Haudenosaunee, and the Wendat peoples, and is home to many diverse First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples.

We acknowledge them and any other Nations who care for the land (acknowledged and unacknowledged, recorded and unrecorded) as the past, present, and future caretakers of this land, the traditional territory named Tkarón:to, the Mohawk word for "the place in the water where the trees are standing." The treaty for this particular parcel of land (Treaty 13), collectively referred to as the Toronto Purchase, applies to lands east of Brown's Line to Woodbine Avenue and north towards Newmarket.

We recognize the enduring presence of Indigenous peoples on this land. We commit ourselves to addressing and disrupting the systems of oppression and the colonial forces that undermine, distort, or erase the vital role of Indigenous peoples in our world, and recognize stewardship as a shared responsibility of all those who reside in a territory, as is the spirit of the Dish With One Spoon Wampum agreements.



ABOUT NIGHTWOOD THEATRE

As Canada's foremost feminist theatre, Nightwood Theatre is driven by artistic excellence, advocacy, and the successful training and development of artists that self-identify as having lived experience touched by womanhood – this includes but is not limited to trans, cis, Two-Spirit and non-binary folks. Founded in 1979, Nightwood Theatre has created and produced award-winning plays, which have won Dora Mavor Moore, Chalmers, Trillium and Governor General's Awards. To learn more about Nightwood Theatre, please visit nightwoodtheatre.net.

ABOUT WRITE FROM THE HIP

Write From The Hip is a year-long script development program designed to support new writers through mentorship, one-on-one dramaturgy, developmental workshops and readings, all working towards the completion of a full length play. Nightwood has gone on to produce a number of the plays developed in this program, including *Lo (or, Dear Mr. Wells)* by Rose Napoli, *Every Day She Rose* by Andrea Scott and Nick Green and *Grace* by Jane Doe.

Illustrations of the Nightwood Theatre team by Yessenia Rodriguez. From left to right, top to bottom: Jesscia Watkin, Donna-Michelle St. Bernard, Andrea Donaldson, Naz Afsahi, Erika Morey. Sedina Fiati, Amanda Lin, Teiya Kasahara 笠原貞野 and Taylor Trowbridge.

WELCOME TO GROUNDSWELL!



Since 1985, the Groundswell Festival has been a place of 'firsts' for new works. It is an event that embraces process over polish and attracts artists and audiences who want the thrill of experiencing raw works by exceptional creators.

This season we have five public readings from the Write From The Hip emerging playwrights program, two free professional development sessions for the community, and one in-house workshop of a commissioned new play.

We are grateful to be able to be the first home for many of these newer playwrights and to surround them with the immense talent this city has to offer with an accomplished array of guest directors and actors to breathe life into their words.

Thank you so much for being a part of Groundswell!

Donna Michelle St. Berard
Program Director

&

Andrea Donaldson
Artistic Director

Nightwood's Write From The Hip playwright unit is generously supported by:



Special thanks to:



Canada Council
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THE
READY
COMMITMENT

MISSNOMER

BY JILLIAN WELSH

Directed by **Esther Jun**

Assistant Directed by **Amanda Lin**

Performed by **Jillian Welsh**

Stage directions read by **Laura Piccinin**

Raised in a conservative small town to believe that a woman can only be one of three categories – a chaste maiden, a slut, or the God forbidden lesbian – what happens when you discover that you're all three and then some?

Missnomer playfully explores a collection of true stories that defy the confines of what a young women's sexuality should look like.

Content warning: sexual assault



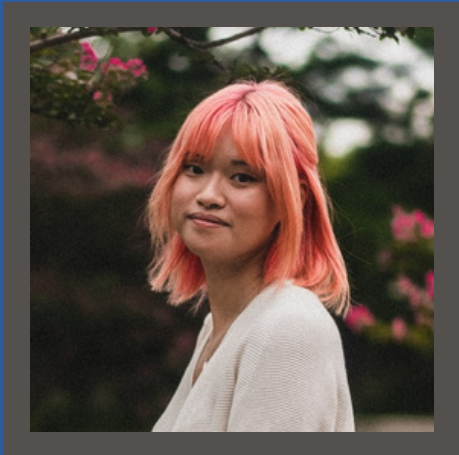
JILLIAN WELSH (she/her) – Playwright & Performer

Jillian grew up in Southwestern Ontario before moving to NYC at the peak of the “hipster” moment only to land in Toronto. This has led to a deep and unsettling fear that she will never know “plaid” to be unfashionable. Jillian is a current cast member of the Second City’s national touring company, a Dora nominated actor and cast member of Extravaganza Eleganza, winner of a 2019 Canadian Comedy Award. Selected TV credits include: *Baroness Von Sketch Show*, *Working Moms*, *TALL Boyz*, and *Odd Squad*. Selected Theatre: Ophelia in *Hamlet* (American Globe Theatre NYC), *ENCORE!* (USA National Tour), Sandra in *Served* (NOW Best Ensemble) and *No Place* (NOW Outstanding Performance). Jillian’s stories can be heard on *This American Life*, CBC’s *Love Me* and *RISK!*



ESTHER JUN (she/her) – Director

Esther Jun is the Director of the Langham Directors' Workshop and Artistic Associate in Planning for the Stratford Festival. Select credits include *Les Belles-Soeurs* (upcoming 2023), *Little Women*, *I Am William* (Stratford Festival); *Between a Wok and a Hotpot* (Cahoots); *The Great Leap* (Cleveland Playhouse); *Kim's Convenience* (Thousand Islands); *Planet Munsch* (George Brown); *Pal Joey*, *The Gamblers*, *Amadeus* (Talk Is Free); *The Promised Land* (Soulpepper); *The Omnibus Bill* (Counterpoint Players); *Theory*, *Girls Like That* (Tarragon); *The Private Life Cabaret* (Theatre ARTaud); *The Last Wife* (Belfry, GCTC); *Rococo* (Shaw); *Bremen Rock City* (Song Trolley Productions); *Cowboy Mouth*, *Trout Stanley* (Heart In Hand); *Yellow Face* (Hart House); *Fear and Misery of the Third Reich* (DeusXM). Training: B.A.H. Directing, Drama Centre London. Et cetera: Assistant Artistic Director at Tarragon (2016-2018); Co-Founder of Directors Lab North.



AMANDA LIN 林美智 (she/her) – Assistant Director

Amanda is a friend, playwright, daughter, arts administrator, crochet enthusiast, performer, and director. She is a graduate of Queen's University, where she studied social psychology, theatre, and business, with her area of research centring on attitudes and social influence. She is interested in using art and storytelling to cultivate compassionate and dynamic communities. Amanda currently works at Nightwood Theatre, where she spends her time fundraising and co-leading emerging artist programs such as the Nightwood Innovators and Rising Moon. Her first full-length play, *Between a Wok and a Hot Pot (Asian Canadian Dinner Theatre)*, is premiering with Cahoots Theatre in January 2023.

A FREE BRITNEY

By MERLIN SIMARD

Directed by **Donna-Michelle St. Bernard**

Featuring **isi bhakhomen**, **Tamyka Bullen** and **leZlie lee kam**

ASL-English Interpretation by **Mel Cyr** and **Rogue Benjamin**

Stage directions read by **Sarah O'Brecht**

oooh, baby, baby! **A Free Britney** is a series of bilingual monologues (English/French) that investigates the tensions between body sovereignty and the medical system. Follow the intertwining narratives of three, separate Britneys in different times of their lives: A fifth-grader in French Immersion raised by virulent anti-vaxxers, a teenager seeking treatment for their ADHD unbeknownst to their parents, and a 70 year-old non-binary grandparent redefining their life-long relationship with their primary caregiver. Each Britney will have to challenge their own structures of care in order to heal, but at what cost?

Content warning: this piece explores themes relating to ableism, transphobia and blasphemy. Please proceed with care.



MERLIN SIMARD (she/they/iel/elle) – Playwright

Merlin is a performer, playwright, dramaturge, and filmmaker originally from Tiohtiá:ke (Montréal) now based in Tkarón:to (Toronto). Her practice focuses on themes of access, gender euphoria, technology, and multilingual performance. They co-founded and co-run, bigT, a theatre collective seeking to uplift intersectional trans* voices.

Select theatre performance credits: *Orlando* (Talk Is Free Theatre), *E-TRANSFERS* (Buddies In Bad Times/bcurrent/NTS), *Curious Voyage* (Talk Is Free Theatre/DLT), *The Flick* (Crow's Theatre/Outside The March), *Tape Escape* (Outside The March).

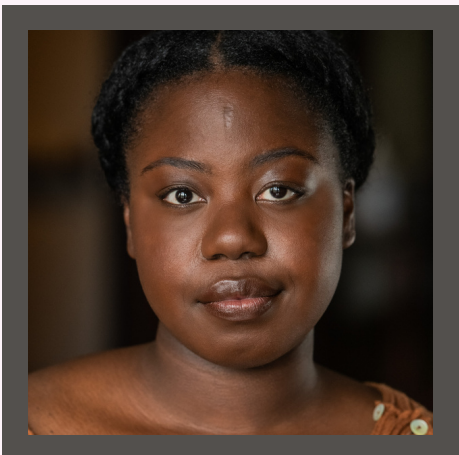
TV/Film: *Grand Army* (Netflix), *This Life* (CBC). They are

developing several projects spanning across theatre and VR with the support of Theatre Passe Muraille (*FEAR OF MEN*), Théâtre Français de Toronto (*ZADDY ISSUES*) and the Musée des Beaux Arts de Montréal (*E-TRANSFERS*) amongst others. [@hussy4hussy](#)



DONNA-MICHELLE ST. BERNARD (she/her) – Director

Donna-Michelle St. Bernard (aka Belladonna the Beast) is an emcee, playwright, dramaturge and agitator. Her work has been nominated for the Siminovitch Prize, Governor General's Literary Awards, SATA, Herman Voaden Playwriting Award, Enbridge PlayRites Award and Dora Mavor Moore Award for Outstanding New Play. She has been engaged as a dramaturge for Pink Pluto, Native Earth Performing Arts, Factory Theatre, lemonTree creations and Humber College Drama Program. DM is the artistic director of New Harlem Productions, emcee in residence at Theatre Passe Muraille, playwright in residence at lemonTree creations, Program Director for Nightwood Theatre's Write From The Hip playwrights unit and coordinator of the ADHOC Assembly.



isi bhakhomen (they/them) – Performer

isi is an actor of Afro-Peruvian and Nigerian descent. Through stories they aim to build worlds that give black children the freedom to breathe, to laugh and to heal. In addition, they hold a certificate in acting from the National Theatre School of Canada. You can find out more at www.isibhakhomen.com



TAMYKA BULLEN – Performer

Tamyka Bullen has been involved in social services for women, immigrants, youths, and the LGBTQA community for many years. In 2015 she became involved in the theatrical world as an ASL poetry performer. In 2018, she debuted as an actress for the Sound Off Festival production *Deaf That!* and Judith Thompson's play *After the Blackout*. She trained to become a playwright while taking the retreat in Banff in 2018. She teaches ASL lessons and loves to craft and mingle stories, arts, poems, acting, and dance on stage, and to voice her feelings and thoughts through her hands, body language, and facial expressions. Her motto: Embrace Yourself, Show Yourself!



leZlie lee kam – Performer

I identify as a World Majority, brown, Carib, trini , Indo, Chinese, callaloo, differently-abled, Jurassic, queer DYKE Elder/Senior. I am a community activist, educator, connector, story-teller and sometime actor. I live and work from an intersectional/intergenerational perspective. My mission is to agitate, disrupt, infiltrate and respectfully cause trouble in my advocacy for the Equity/Equality of ALL 2S-LGBTQI+ folX. In 2020, I was bestowed the honour of Queen of Rainbow Seniors in Canada. I enjoy dim sum, doubles, dancing and a hot "lime" anytime. Check me out on *1 Queen 5 Queers* - Season 2 - Episode 5 - CRAVE. Currently enjoying a Digital Residency [@lemontree_creations](https://www.instagram.com/lemontree_creations/): oct31-nov6/2022

JUST US

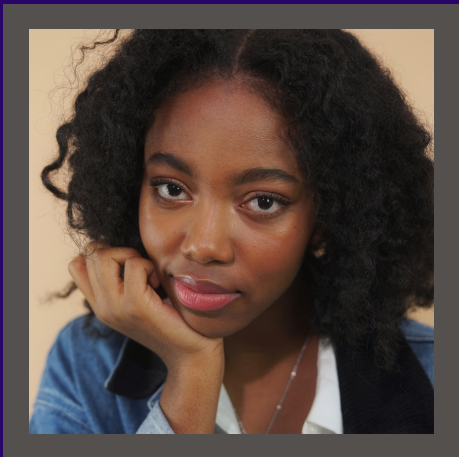
BY JULIET JONES-RODNEY

Directed by **Sedina Fiati**

Featuring **Joshua Browne, Shomari Downer, Keeya King, Dante Jemmott and Emerjade Simms**

How much can a relationship take? Amaya and Michael are the couple goals of their friend group. When Michael is wrongfully incarcerated we follow Amaya on her quest to free her partner while trying to protect their relationship from the challenges of a racist system and the barriers of separation, incarceration and other changes.

Content warning: This script contains discussions of incarceration, racism in policing and weed prohibition. Some audience members may find this disturbing or triggering. Please feel free to take the time you need to put your well being first. This is a judgement free space.



JULIET JONES-RODNEY (she/her) – Playwright

Juliet Jones-Rodney is a singer, writer, actor, and producer born and raised in Toronto. She looks to centre identities of Blackness in her pieces and as a Black woman, allows her history and perspective to inform her work. Previously, Juliet was a part of the Playwright's Unit in the 2021 season of the Paprika Theatre Festival in which her play *Forest for the Trees* debuted. Outside of theatre, Juliet is also an emerging singer/songwriter who released her debut single *Free Falling* in January 2022.



SEDINA FIATI (she/they) – Director

Sedina Fiati is a Toronto based performer, producer, director, creator and activist for stage and screen. Proudly Black and queer, Sedina is deeply invested in artistic work that explores the intersection between art and activism, either in form or structure or ideally both. Sedina holds a BFA in Music Theatre from the University of Windsor and has been active as a theatre artist for over 15 years.

Favourite and recent artistic projects: Children's Peace Camp (Children's Peace Theatre, director), *Every Day She Rose* (Nightwood Theatre, co-director), *Switch: The Village* (collective member, QTBIPOC street performance, Buddies in Bad Times 2018 & 2019), Feminist Fuck It Festival (multidisciplinary festival, co-creator and co-producer). Upcoming projects: *Switching Queen(s)* (devised street performance), *Last Dance* (a web series). Sedina is also a facilitator and panelist in the areas of equity, diversity and inclusion. Recent work: Nightwood Theatre's Feminist Unconference (facilitator), Toronto Fringe (Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Audit Co-Facilitator), Stratford Symposium 2019 (panelist), Reel World Film Festival 2019 (panel moderator), Making Space for Conflict with the AFC (facilitator), CTV's Your Morning (panelist), Woke 2.0 Social Justice Workshop series (creator and facilitator).



KEEYA KING (she/her) – Performer

Keeya King is from Rexdale, Ontario. She is an actress known for her work in the television series *Van Helsing*, *Batwoman*, and the Emmy nominated series *Yellowjackets*.



JOSHUA BROWNE (he/him) – Performer

Josh is an actor, director, writer, choreographer, performance coach and professional dungeon master (the TTRPG kind). He likes to spend as much time as possible playing pretend for a living, and has done so on screens and stages all over the country, having most recently appeared in The Coal Mine Theatre's production of *The Antipodes*. If you'd like to hire him to take you on a wild fantasy adventure, you can find him at www.dungeoneeringinc.com. For all other hirings his agent is Alicia Faucher at Element Artist Management.



SHOMARI DOWNER (he/him) – Performer

Shomari Downer is a Jamaican-Canadian actor and writer who draws from a diverse range of life experiences, realities and communities to bring characters to life. He is a 2020 alumni of the prestigious CFC Actors Conservatory. As an actor he first got his start on the screen in films such as John Singleton's *4 Brothers* and Charles Officer's *Nurse.Fighter.Boy*. Shomari's TV credits have gone on to include roles in series such as *Diggstown*, *The Mist*, *Rogue* and *Expanse*. Shomari's starring role in the acclaimed Canadian indie feature film *Edging* won the Canadian Film Festival's Peoples Choice Award. He has also pursued his passion in theatre where he has performed in the renowned plays *Secrets of a Black Boy*, *Born Ready*, and the award-winning *Aneemah's Spot*. More recently he played a supporting role in Charles Officer's award winning feature film *Akilla's Escape*. As an emerging filmmaker with a passion for authentic story telling and honest characters, Shomari sees his next steps in this industry being those of a creator and writer. A challenge that he relishes.



DANTE JEMMOTT – Performer

Dante Jemmott is a Toronto based actor. He played Romeo in the Stratford Festival and Why Not Theatre production of *R+J*, and he was Bertram in Shakespeare's *All's Well That Ends Well* at Chicago Shakespeare Theatre. Most recently, he joined Why Not Theatre on a US Tour of their production, *Prince Hamlet*, as Laertes. Dante plays Walter in the web-series *Coming Distractions* and appears in CBC Gem's mini-series *Revenge of the Black Best Friend* as Dean. He received his training at York University in the Acting Conservatory. There, he appeared in the production of William Shakespeare's *Coriolanus*, Charles Mee's *Iphigenia 2.0*, Suzan-Lori Parks's *365 Days/365 Plays* and Amy Rutherford's *Mortified*. Dante was the voice of W.L. Hutton at the Into The Light Exhibition at the Guelph Civic Museum.



EMERJADE SIMMS (she/her) – Performer

Emerjade Simms is a Jamaican-Canadian actor, storyteller and sometimes-director. She is a graduate of the Acting program at the University of Windsor and holds a BFA degree. Emerjade is also a 2016/17 graduate of the Mechanicals program at Factory Theatre. In her career as an actor so far, she has worked with many wonderful people and companies. Select theatre credits include *Redbone Coonhound* (Arts Club), *Calpurnia* (RMTC/NAC), *The Mountaintop* (Persephone Theatre), *1851: Spirit and Voice* (Soulpepper/Myseum), *21 Black Futures: Omega Child* (Obsidian/CBC), *Peter Pan* (Bad Hats/Soulpepper), *School Girls; Or, The African Mean Girls Play** (Obsidian/Nightwood), *Wounded Soldiers* (4th Line), *The Bird Killer* (Let Me In). Television credits include *Forbidden*, *Fear Thy Neighbor*, *See No Evil* and *Paranormal 911*. Emerjade enjoys napping in her downtime and thanks her mom for everything. *Dora Award Winner for Outstanding Production

AS A FORMER FAT KID

BY STEPHANIE FUNG

Directed by **Keshia Palm**

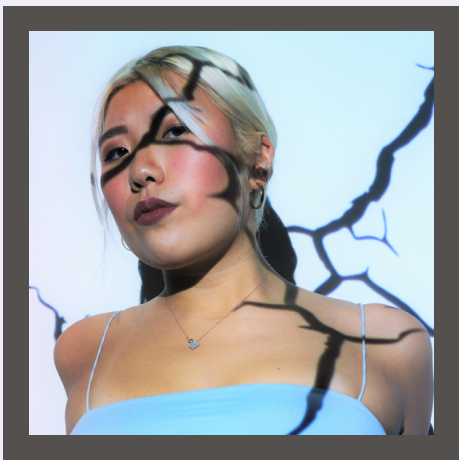
Featuring **Stephanie Fung, Emily Jung and Phoebe Hu**

Stage directions read by **Heather Lundrigan**

No one wants anything to do with Egghead. Not even Egghead. Food may be an unspoken form of love, but Egghead bears witness to what happens when that dynamic is twisted. And fucked up for all parties.

As a former fat kid reflects the dissonance and dysmorphia of being caught between two cultures, and how we start to get unstuck. A performance art-style play in prose, this piece explores what it's like to be unconventionally ugly and beautiful at the same.

Content warning: Emotional abuse, eating disorders, addiction, sexual assault, self-harm, and suicide.



STEPHANIE FUNG (they/she) – Playwright & Performer

Stephanie is an interdisciplinary artist and arts worker who falls somewhere between their family's first and second generations on this land, and flat on the understanding that this land was not meant for her. Upon obtaining her BAH in Drama and Indigenous Studies from Queen's University, she joined the Kingston Theatre Alliance as a theatre critic, now Blog Editor. Select performance credits include: *Collider* (Single Thread Theatre Company), *The Intangible Queer* (YIKES a Theatre Company); *Y2Kaper* (6am Productions); *Christina, the Girl King* (5th Company Lane); *Between a Wok and a Hot Pot* (Theatre Count); *In This World* (Theatre Count); *paper SERIES* (5th Company Lane); and *Concord Floral* (Theatre Kingston)



KESHIA PALM (she/they) – Director

Keshia is a Filipinx-German artist from Treaty 6 Territory who seeks to expose, challenge and dismantle systems of oppression by creating thoughtful and inclusive art/spaces — as Producer, Director, Dramaturge, Playwright, or Actor. Keshia has developed and performed new works with IBPOC, queer, women, and trans artists with companies across Canada. Since 2016, they've found community where there are trees standing in the water creating art, bringing artists together, and supporting emerging artists through ArtistProducerResource.com, and artistic producing the Paprika Festival. During the pandemic, she has focused on creating micro-art-experiences by sharing personal stories, going outside, reflecting on what gifts the future will bring, and what tools we have to ignite transformative change.



EMILY JUNG (she/her) – Performer

Emily is an emerging, interdisciplinary artist/artsworker working in Toronto. Whether in artistic or in administrative capacity, she attempts to offer her labour in the forms of simplicity, clarity, and care. On good days, she is working on kickstarting the grassroots artsworker collective: Labour In The Arts. On most days, she is looking for a patch of sun to lie down and nap in. Her drawings have been shown in The Gathering at the Cultural Pluralism in the Arts Movement Ontario (CPAMO), Space-on-Space Magazine in Los Angeles, and at The Art Space at Museum Strathroy-Caradoc in Strathroy. Her recent creative essay: *Korean Seniors Don't Care for Bingo*, will come out on Choa Web Magazine in November 2022. She is currently developing the play *Dead Korean Girl Comedy Show*. Learn more about her work at emilyjung.com. 15



PHOEBE HU 胡馨勻 (she/her) – Performer

Phoebe Hu 胡馨勻 is an immigrant-settler of Taiwanese decent and an interdisciplinary performer-creator currently based in Ontario. Phoebe's work is deeply informed and inspired by her training in traditional Chinese music and her experience as a street dancer-choreographer in Asia. She also holds a B.A. in Foreign Languages and Literatures from National Taiwan University, and a Triple Threat Award upon graduation from Randolph College for the Performing Arts. Fuelled by being at the intersection of disciplines and learning from different perspectives; Phoebe has had the pleasure of working with artists and companies and institutions across Ontario not only as actor, singer, dancer, musician, and puppeteer, but also in creative positions such as movement coach, language consultant, cultural dramaturge, assistant director, and guest instructor. Selected recent credits: *Wedding Season* (Netflix), *Orphan Song* (Tarragon Theatre), *Cabaret* (Grand Theatre).

BLACK MASKS

BY OMOLOLA AJAO

Directed by **Lisa Karen Cox**

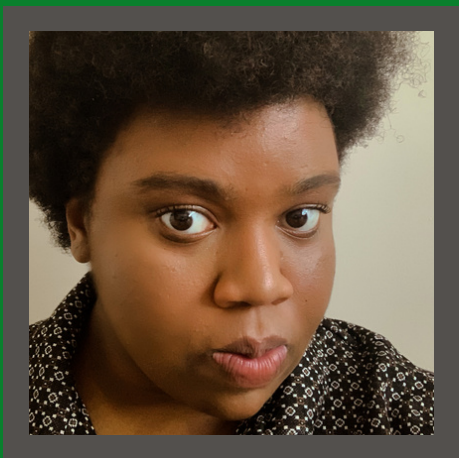
Featuring **Aviva Armour-Ostroff, Dorothy A. Atabong, Emerjade Simms** and **Amaka Umeh**

Stage directions read by **Katherine Teed-Arthur**

Abimbola will start a reckoning on her White campus.

Black Masks is a three-act play that follows the overlapping positions of four women at a sedentary university; a Black undergrad, a Black grad student, a Black professor and a White chair. Omolola Ajao writes within the passionate racial crux of unbridled student revolution and hardened departmental politics. As positions become estranged, aged facades are contested and assimilated performances are peeled away, this play asks what will be left when masks are taken off?

Please note, the playwright is using the capitalization of "w" in White to bring attention to the systemic white supremacy that thrives in the world of the play. Content warning: death, suicide, and sexual assault.



OMOLOLA AJAO – Playwright

Omolola is a Nigerian-Canadian playwright and filmmaker. Existing in the realm of Black realism and magical Black realism, her priority in filmmaking and playwrighting is to create Black interiority and complex emotionality, carefully presenting the specific lives of people she knows and creates. Her first film *Prodigal* documented three young African women on their burgeoning conceptions of home and screened nationally. Her second film *YYZ*, was acquired by CBC Gem, and was awarded a Canadian Screen Award. Her third film *Fufu*, is currently on the festival circuit. *From Across The Table* is her first play.



LISA KAREN COX – Director

A graduate of Concordia University's Interdisciplinary Studies program, Lisa Karen Cox relishes work that combines music, movement and heightened language. Often playing men and other mythical creatures, theatre credits include: Director for *1851: Spirit and Voice* (Soulpepper/Myseum), *Beyere* (CBC Gem/Obsidian Theatre), *Anna Karenina* for UTM/Sheridan, and *Untamed* (TMU). Assistant Director for *We Are Proud to Present a Presentation about the Herero of Namibia...(Theatre Centre)*, *Salt-Water Moon* (Factory Theatre), *The Adventures of the Black Girl in Her Search for God*, and Associate Director for Why Not Theatre's Toronto productions of *Like Mother, Like Daughter*. In addition to performance and direction, Lisa has explored playwriting, dramaturgy during the creation of *Now You See Her* and enjoys working with emerging playwrights. Lisa Karen Cox is an Assistant Professor of Acting at Toronto Metropolitan. She completed a Master of Science in Education (M.S. Ed.) and spent over a decade working in the performing arts with the Toronto District School Board.



AVIVA ARMOUR-OSTROFF (she/her) – Performer

Aviva works as an actor, director, writer and producer. Aviva recently finished a production of *Forever Young*, at The Great Canadian Theatre Company. She is a member of the theatre company ARC, where she co-directed ARC's production of *Oil*. Favourite acting credits include Paradigm Theatre's *The Philosopher's Wife*, VideoCabaret's *The Great War* (Dora Award, Best Ensemble), ARC's *Moment* (Dora Nomination), and *The Miracle Worker* (Western Canada Theatre). Aviva was the founder and Artistic Director of The Lab Cab Festival for thirteen years. She is the co-director of the film adaptation of

the play *The Drawer Boy*. Aviva wrote, co-directed, and starred in the feature film *Lune*, which gained her a Canadian Screen Award nomination for her performance, and honoured her as the first Canadian to win The Micki Moore Award for Best Feature at TJFF. [@lunethefilm](#)



DOROTHY A. ATABONG (she/her) – Performer

Selected credits include, *The Handmaid's Tale* (Hulu/MGM), *Mayday* (Discovery Channel), *The Line* (TMN & Movie Central), and *Degrassi: The Next Generation*; PSAs for Stephen Lewis Foundation – help fight AIDS in Africa. Selected Theatre Credits: *The First Stone* at Buddies in Bad Times, Volcano Theatre's *Africa Trilogy* at the Toronto Luminato Arts Festival, *The Overwhelming* at The Canadian Stage Company. As a Writer-Director, her short film *Eye of the Veil* made its world premiere at the 35th OUT On Film, Atlanta and is touring the film festival circuit. Previous short film, *Sound Of Tears*, screened at over 45 film festivals worldwide. Won The Africa Movie Academy Award; Platinum Remi at WorldFest-Houston; Court-métrage de fiction, Burundi, Best Film and Best Director Nominations for the Golden Sheaf Award at Yorkton Film Festival; Ousmane Sembene Award – Zanzibar International Film Festival and Best Film at The Pan African Film Festival in LA and Cannes. An alumna of the Women In the Director's Chair (WIDC) and directed the CBC's critically acclaimed *21 Black Futures – Season 3 - Yen Ara Asaase Ni/This Is Our Own Native Land*. Winner of the 2020 Cayle Chernin Award. Feature script, *Zenzile's Journey* is currently in development in partnership with Telefilm Canada. Also in the festival circuit is short film, *My niece Zenzile*, as part of the Caribbean tales Incubator Studio Access Initiative. Dorothy is mentored by two-time Oscar nominated Director Atom Egoyan, and was selected for the 2022 Netflix/Banff Diversity of Voices Initiative.



EMERJADE SIMMS (she/her) – Performer

Emerjade Simms is a Jamaican-Canadian actor, storyteller and sometimes-director. She is a graduate of the Acting program at the University of Windsor and holds a BFA degree. Emerjade is also a 2016/17 graduate of the Mechanicals program at Factory Theatre. In her career as an actor so far, she has worked with many wonderful people and companies. Select theatre credits include *Redbone Coonhound* (Arts Club), *Calpurnia* (RMTC/NAC), *The Mountaintop* (Persephone Theatre), *1851: Spirit and Voice* (Soulpepper/Myseum), *21 Black Futures: Omega Child* (Obsidian/CBC), *Peter Pan* (Bad Hats/Soulpepper), *School Girls; Or, The African Mean Girls Play** (Obsidian/Nightwood), *Wounded Soldiers* (4th Line), *The Bird Killer* (Let Me In). Television credits include *Forbidden*, *Fear Thy Neighbor*, *See No Evil* and *Paranormal 911*. Emerjade enjoys napping in her downtime and thanks her mom for everything. *Dora Award Winner for Outstanding Production



AMAKA UMEH (she/they) – Performer

Amaka Ume is a Tkaronto-based storyteller of Nigerian (Igbo & Ikwerre) origin. A graduate of the Randolph Academy for Performing Arts, she explores the transformative potential of investigating truth through imagination, and wrestles with the limitations of the spoken word as a vehicle for understanding. Their work has been generously recognized with two Dora Mavor Moore Awards, a BBPA Harry Jerome Award, and a Toronto Theatre Critics' Association Award. Amaka completed the Stratford Festival Birmingham Conservatory for Classical Theatre, Factory Theatre Mechanicals and Toronto Fringe T.E.N.T. Programs. Selected credits: Hamlet in *Hamlet*, Praise-Singer in *Death and the Kings Horseman*, Helena/Flute/Moth in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Stratford);

Audiobook narration for *Butter Honey Pig Bread* by Francesca Ekwuyasi (ECW Press); 00 in *The Wolves* (Howland Company/Crow's); Abigail in *A Christmas Carol* (Grand Theatre); Spiker in *James and the Giant Peach* (Young People's Theatre).

EMERGING ARTIST CURTAIN-RAISERS

LILY by Ciana Henderson

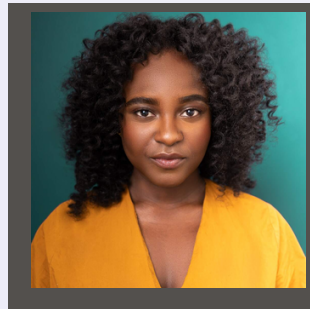


Digital Performance
Available Nov 21-25

[CLICK HERE TO VIEW](#)

Lily is bold, abandoned, and incredibly unfiltered. She's thought about how she wants to die and questions why she's still here. Lily hasn't quite figured out how to like herself yet, but she's working on it and hopes you are too. *Trigger Warning: suicide*

Stepping on Cracks by Kijo Gatama

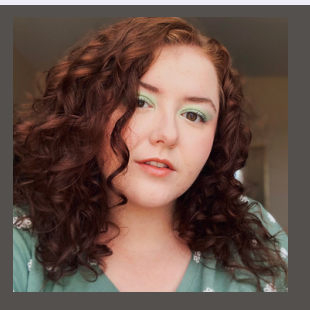


Digital Performance
Available Nov 21-25

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Stepping on Cracks is a new work, it's a blend of fiction and memory through the gaze of a child to adult. It follows Mumbi, and her journey uncovering the history of her family's genetics.

MFG by Jena McLean

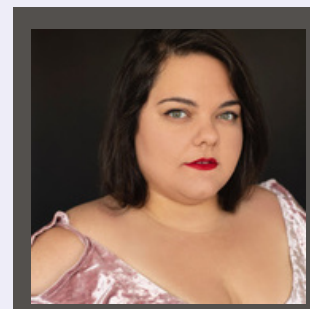


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After a lifetime of playing the funny fat friend, university student Dillon Sands is shocked to wake up one morning as the main character. As new flames and exes alike come crawling out of the woodwork, Dillon must contend with her newfound visibility and its impact on her closest friends.

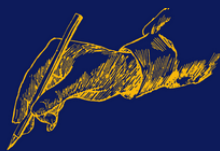
Ancestors Soup by Carly Anna Billings



Live Performance
Nov 25

When life throws a potluck what do you bring? ***Ancestors Soup*** offers an immersive and exploratory experience made up of vignettes, music, monologues and movement that portray the femme members of the Carly's family tree on branches low and high.

WORKSHOPS & GATHERINGS



CREATRYX 2.0 *A Zoom of Our Own*

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 23, 12-1:15 PM

Creatryx 2.0: A Zoom of Our Own

Let's flex our collaborative creative muscles. Inspired by a prompt and given some light directions, small groups of artists will create and share a short piece. Creators of all kinds welcome to this digital gathering: playwrights, dancers, movers, musicians and beyond!

This moment of collective creation will be facilitated by Nightwood Theatre's Artist/Activist in Residence **Sedina Fiati**, [please click here to register!](#)



HIVEMIND

Brainstorm & Connect @ Groundswell



THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 24, 12:00-2:00 PM

Hivemind: Brainstorm & Connect @ Groundswell

Calling all theatre creators, playwrights and artist-producers! Part pitch clinic, part meet and greet, join the Nightwood team in-person for Hivemind: Brainstorm & Connect @ Groundswell! Discuss your project with a small group of fellow participants and then chat with members from the Nightwood team for further perspective on the work you are developing. Tap into the feminist-artsworker hivemind to inspire your next step and maybe make a new connection or two. [Please click here to register!](#)

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 25, 5:00-6:30 PM

Theatre Workers Craft 'n Chill



After the success of the first Theatre Workers Zone Out in the Park Event in August, Nightwood and Labour in the Arts is bringing crafts and good zone out times to the 2022 Groundswell Festival! Making theatre can be hard work, and at times draining and isolating. Theatre workers are invited to join co-facilitators Amanda Lin and Emily Jung (Labour in the Arts, Theatre Passe Muraille) and recharge with snacks, crafts, community, and absolutely NO WORK TALK at the Daniels Spectrum lobby. At 6:30pm we will adjourn to attend the final staged reading of Groundswell in Aki Studio. [Please click here to register!](#)

NightwoodTheatre



THANK YOU TO NIGHTWOOD'S INDIVIDUAL DONORS

\$30,000

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\$100–\$249

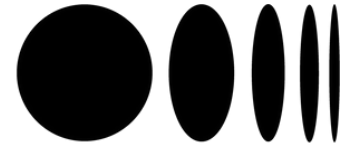
Anonymous x 4, Azita Gerami and Ahmad Afsahi, Wasseim Al Zouabi, Moira & Ed Bacon, Linn Baran, Danielle Bourgon, Cathay Lloyd, Joan Cranston, BJ Danylchuk, Lia De Groot, Sabina Delvecchio, Barbara Fingerote, Patty Fleming, Matt Fowler, Jean Gourdeau, Harriett Grant, Joyce & Grahame Henry, Rose Janson, Jani Lauzon, Corinne Leon, Jeanne LeSage, H. Ian & Dorothy Macdonald, Robin Mackie, Mary Motz, Dan Murdoch, Eleanor O'Connor, Judith Parker, Burke Paterson, Colleen Pollreis, Jacquie Robison, Michael Schechter, Marsha Sfeir, Paula Shewchuk, Linda Silver Dranoff, Linda & Alan Slavin, Imre Szeman, Suzanne Thompson, Bruce Wilkinson, Anthea Windsor, Elaine Wong, Richard Worsfold, Hersh Zeifman

\$1–\$99

Anonymous x 16, Catherine Balla Boudreau, Simon Baron, Alma Bjelosevic, Tessa Bouchier, Margaret Bryce, Steven Bush, Paul Butler & Chris Black, Alex Cameron, Pamela Cameron, Zosia Cassie, Joan Chandler, Shannon Charnock-Davis, Matt Code, Dawn Langille, Ellen Denny, Matthew DesRosiers, William & Sue Donaldson, Karen Franklin, Alisdair Gadowsky, Christine Gresham, Colette Habel, Jacqueline Hardy, Melanie Herbin, Karen Hines, Jon Hunt, Jane Hutcheson, Marcia Johnson, Cecil King, Marsha Klerer, Geoff Kolomayz, Diana Kolpak, Michelle Krieger, Deanna Kruger, Anne Learn Sharpe, Reva Lokhande, Patricia Marsh, Hope McIntyre, Jane Mills, Mary Milne, Tracey Nesbitt, Mary Oko, Linda Padfield, Keshia Palm, Kate Pharoah, Rena Post, Trudee Romanek, Kydra Ryan, Marjan Sadeghian, Ana Sasic, Ellen Schoenberger, Marie Schram, Rebecca Sugarman, Emma Tibaldo, Delanie Tiniakos-Doran, Sheila Toller, Chantria Tram, Diana Tso, Michaela Washburn, Anne Wessels, Katie Wilson

Donations received since July 1, 2021. Last updated on September 8, 2022. If your name has been misspelled or omitted, please accept our sincere apologies, and don't hesitate to reach out to Amanda Lin, Artistic & Engagement Associate, at amanda@nightwoodtheatre.net.

NightwoodTheatre



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|----------------------------------|--|
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| Naz Afsahi | Managing Director |
| Sedina Fiati | Artist/Activist In Residence |
| Erika Morey | Head of Development |
| Taylor Trowbridge | Head of Communications & Engagement |
| Amanda Lin | Artistic & Engagement Associate |
| Donna-Michelle St. Bernard | Write From The Hip Program Director |
| Max Cameron Fearon | Write From The Hip Program Associate for 2021/22 |
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