



FATUMA
ADAR'S

SHE'S NOT SPECIAL

A

TARRAGON THEATRE

and

Nightwood Theatre ●●●●●

presentation

Cast & Creative Team

Fatuma Adar

Writer/Performer/Co-Director

Graham Isador

Co-Director/Dramaturg

Victoria Laberge

Producer

Deb Lim

Production Manager

Lucy McPhee*

Stage Manager

Ben Elliott

Music Supervisor

Adrian Hogan

Music Director/Keyboardist

Joe Pagnan

Set and Lighting Designer

Roya DelSol

Videographer/Video Editor/Projection Designer

Skyler James

Assistant Set and Lighting Designer/
Associate Projection Designer

Worrell McFarlane

Drums

Evan Porter

Bass

* The participation of this Artist is arranged by permission of Canadian Actors' Equity Association under the provisions of the Dance•Opera•Theatre Policy (DOT).

Opening Acts

May 24 - Denise McLeod

May 25 - Denise McLeod

May 26 - Jay Northcott

May 27 - Lena Recollet

May 28 - Lena Recollet

The *She's Not Special* team has made a donation to the Native Women's Resource Centre. We invite you to join us!

Acknowledgments

The *She's Not Special* team would like to thank the following folks for all their support:

Jiv Parasram & Tom Arthur Davis - Pandemic Theatre,
Andrea Scott, Avery-Jean Brennan, The Braided Bar,
Jay Northcott, Lena Recollet, Denise B. McLeod,
Inaam Haq, Katerina Zoumboulakis, Gillian Mapp,
Stephen Owusu, Amanda Wong, Alexa DelSol,
Rita Ushakova, Zaki Farrow, Rex's Ice Cream,
Black Women Film, Toronto Arts Council,
Ontario Arts Council, and Canada Council for the Arts.

She's Not Special was first presented at Bad Dog Theatre (2019) and then at Toronto Fringe's Next Stage Festival (2022). We thank both companies for their support in the development of this show.

Land Acknowledgment

Tarragon Theatre and Nightwood Theatre acknowledge that we all are a part of a larger ecosystem within our community, Tkaronto, where our theatre lives and operates – and that we also commit ourselves and in turn energize our audiences to continually reflect on and respond to our relationship to the land around us. This country has been cared for by generations of First Nations, Inuit and Métis Nations, and the land on which Tarragon rests and is able to share this story has been cherished and protected by, the Anishnabeg, the Haudenosaunee, the Wendat, and the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation.

Toronto is a word that originates from the Mohawk word “Tkaronto,” meaning “the place in the water where the trees are standing,” which is said to refer to the wooden stakes that were used as fishing weirs in the narrows of local river systems by the Haudenosaunee and Wendat. The paths we still walk today, from Davenport to Dupont, are built on the portage trails first established and walked by Indigenous peoples. It is in the spirit of being on the portage route that we invoke our local Indigenous oral history – though covered up by the industrial progress of Toronto – and maintain that those stories are not lost.

We are committed to engaging with these communities in meaningful ways that open dialogue, while acknowledging our own history. We look towards a recognition of our shared humanity to create deeper community connection and accountability. Tarragon’s recognition of the contributions and the historic significance of Indigenous peoples to this land is directly connected to our promise to meet the challenge of Truth and Reconciliation. Making our commitment real in our work and through our community building. Please do check out the QR codes in the lobby to find out how you can extend your support.

A note from our Artistic Directors:

There's something magical about indie shows and their creators. There is urgency, passion and grit that goes into every choice pushed through on a shoestring. These projects are based on goodwill, close relationships, favours and steeped in pleasure and intention.

She's Not Special is a radical and joyous show infused with the goodness of making stuff happen.

Like many works this season it was created during the time that shall not be named and almost made it to the stage. Last year at this time, Fatuma and Graham were poised to present it at the Next Stage Festival and like many others, had to swiftly shift a live work into a digital project. Needless to say, we fell in love with *She's Not Special* from the very first frame of the filmed experience.

Fatuma's journey is immediately identifiable – a laugh out loud emotional roller coaster that invites people to dig deep into their own intersectionalities. We're so honoured to share her work and story with Toronto audiences. It is especially sweet to be in a copresenting relationship between Nightwood and Tarragon Theatre for its first live offering (finally!). This brilliant artistic gathering promises to be an unforgettable moment for us all.

Mike Payette and Andrea Donaldson

Artistic Directors, Tarragon Theatre / Nightwood Theatre

Playwright's note:

Ah, a playwright's note. This is where I tell you about how smart and subversive I am as a storyteller. This is where I tell you about the huge significance my voice has on many communities. This is where— honestly do people even read playwright's notes? I mean I guess you do. Good for you. To the person reading this I say, I hope you're being easy on yourself. I hope the next time you're about to beat yourself up for not being perfect you remember this show. A show that could only exist when I gave myself the permission to be mediocre and the opportunity to fail. So, person who reads playwright's notes, if I was your fairy godmother I would bibbidi bobbidi boop away all the voices in your head that expect so much of you and replace them with a continuous loop of Mary J. Blige's "Just Fine".

Thanks for coming out to support live theatre. I hope you like the show.

Fatuma



FATUMA ADAR

Performer/Writer/Co-director

Fatuma Adar is a Somali-Canadian writer based in Toronto. She was long-listed in CBC's Creative Nonfiction Prize and profiled in *Up Close: Young Black Women Making Canada Better*. In 2017, she joined the third cohort of The Bars Workshop at the Public Theater in New York City.

Her work has been featured in the Toronto Star, The Globe & Mail, Maclean's and an anthology entitled *Black Writers Matter* published by the University of Regina Press. Her musical *Dixon Road* took home the 2022 Dora Mavor Moore Award for Outstanding New Musical.



GRAHAM ISADOR

Co-director/Dramaturg

Selected Theatre Credits: *White Heat* (English Theatre Berlin - writer), *Take d Milk, Nah?* (Pandemic Theatre - co-creator, dramaturg), *Explosions for the 21st* (Summerworks - co-creator, director), *...And You'll Never Believe What Happens Next* (Summerworks - writer, performer), *Situational Anarchy* (Summerworks - writer, performer).

Other: Graham Isador is a writer and creator based in Toronto. A former contributing editor at VICE, his work has appeared at The Globe and Mail, The BBC, and Toronto Life. Isador currently works as a contributing writer with GQ Magazine.



VICTORIA LABERGE

Producer

Selected Theatre Credits: *O Christmas Tea* (James & Jamesy), *Love You Wrong Time* (Nightwood Theatre/Bad Muse Collective), *Niizh* (Native Earth Performing Arts), *Peter's Final Flight: The PAN-Tastical Family Musical!* (Ross Petty Productions), *D&D Live!* (Sex T-Rex), *Bed & Breakfast* (Puppetmongers Theatre), *Save the Date* (Morro and Jasp).

Upcoming: *Easy as Pie* (James & Jamesy), *The Flick* (Persephone Productions), *Our Time: A Broadway Celebration* (Lyric Theatre Singers).

Awards: Honorary Award for Excellence in Publicity - MyEntertainment World Theatre Awards.



DEB LIM 林潔樂

Production Manager

Selected Theatre Credits: *Bug* (manidoons collective, Theatre Passe Muraille, Native Earth); *Private Eyes* (The Honorable Elizabeth Dowdeswell, Lemontree Creations); *No Foreigners* (fu-GEN Theatre, Hong Kong Exile); *Human Animals* (Actors Repertory Company); *Chautauqua*, *Sunday School* (Pearle Harbour Presents); *Rope Running Out* (Lemontree Creations); *Shostakovich*, *Or 3 Days in Red & Italian Mime Suicide* (Bad New Days); *Enchanted Loom* (Cahoots Theatre, Factory Theatre); *Ultrasound* (Cahoots Theatre, Theatre Passe Muraille)

Selected Film and Television Credits: *Chicho* (Pencil Kit Productions); *Date Night* (Date Night Productions); *Of Wise and Earnest Men* (The Crafts Room Productions)

Other: Deb has been working professionally in the Toronto theatre scene since 2014. *She's Not Special* is Deb's last production before they move to Singapore. Deb thanks everyone who has been a part of their journey over the past decade.



LUCY MCPHEE

Stage Manager

Selected Theatre Credits: *9 to 5* (Capitol Theatre), *Box 4901* (timeshare productions), *Every Day She Rose* (Nightwood Theatre), *A Bear Awake In Winter*, *Roxy* (Binocular Theatre), *Anne of Green Gables*, *Asking For It* (Thousand Islands Playhouse), *Dear Evan Hansen* (Mirvish), *Life After*, *Fun Home*, *Dr. Silver* (Musical Stage Company).

Upcoming: Lucy is currently doing a Metcalf Internship in Executive Management with the Toronto Fringe - catch them working and learning at the Toronto Fringe Festival this summer, and Next Stage Theatre Festival in October!



ADRIAN HOGAN

Music Director / Keyboardist

Selected Film and Television Credits: *The Shift* (composer, music coordinator), *Never Seen Again* Season 2 (composer, music coordinator), *FBI True* (composer, music coordinator)

Upcoming: *Who The Bleep Did I Marry* (composer, music coordinator)



BEN ELLIOTT

Music Supervisor

Selected Credits: *Marigold* (Musical Stage Co., lyricist-composer); *The Best Laid Plans* (Touchstone/Patrick Street, lyricist-composer); *The Park!* (Studio 58, lyricist-composer); *Toque: Songs For A Canadian Winter* (The Citadel, creator-performer); The Beatles version of *As You Like It* (Bard On The Beach/Chicago Shakespeare, music supervisor-arranger-performer); *I, Claudia* (Arts Club, composer); *Our Man In Havana* (Persephone/Vertigo, composer).

Film and Television composer credits: *Sharron Matthew's Hello Charlie*; *Human Town Pilot*, *Babá*.

Upcoming: The Beatles version of *As You Like It* (Shakespeare Theatre Company (Wash. DC.) & Theatre Calgary, musical director-performer)

Awards: Recipient of a Jessie Richardson Award, Winnipeg Theatre Award, Ovation Award, the Sydney J. Risk Foundation Acting Prize, the Edmund Kean Sword Award.

Other: Graduate of Bishops University and Studio 58, grateful to Fatuma, Adrian, the Band, Colin Rivers at Marquis Ent., and especially, my incredible wife, Kori.



JOE PAGNAN

Set and Lighting Designer

Selected Theatre Credits: *La Bête*, *Into the Woods*, *The Gamblers*, *Amadeus*, *Beneath Springhill* (Talk is Free Theatre); *Rocky Horror Show*, *Pippin!* (St. Lawrence College); *Jacob Marley*, *We Will Rock You*, *Bed and Breakfast* (Magnus Theatre); *#Kander&Ebb* (Stratford Festival and colored lights); *Stories in the Woods* (Frog In Hand); *Beauty and the Beast*, *Shrek* (Globe Theatre), *Chasing the Path* (Human Body Expression), *Theory* (Tarragon Theatre), *Chautauqua*, *Sunday School* (Pearle Harbour, Sweet Tooth Productions).

Upcoming: *Once* (Thousand Islands Playhouse, set designer), *Ice men* (Theatre By The Bay).

Awards: Dora Mavor Moore Nominee, Broadway World Award, Joseph F Anderson Award, 2017 Pauline McGibbon Award.

Other: To Aspen and Jeff, always to the forest, and forever to water. Home is where you are.



ROYA DELSOL

Videographer/Video Editor/Projection Designer

Roya DelSol is a Black image maker based in T'karonto. Working primarily as a lens-based artist, she aims for her work in all spheres to centre and uplift the experiences Black, queer, and marginalized peoples. She has worked with clients such as Spotify, Adidas, YouTube, Aritzia, FLARE, HXOUSE, the Art Gallery of Ontario, NXNE, Globe & Mail, Maggie's: Toronto Sex Workers Action Project and more.



SKYLER JAMES

**Assistant Set and Lighting Designer,
Associate Projection Designer**

Selected Theatre Credits: *The Pirates of Penzance*,
Dan Exposition Series: Horizons (Queen's University and
the Dan School of Drama and Music); *The Rocky Horror
Picture Show* (St. Lawrence College).

Selected Film and Television Credits: *Bird Watchers*
(Kingston Canadian Film Festival).

Selected Radio Credits: The Intersection of Folk and
Hyperpop, Trail Mix (CFRC 101.9FM).

Upcoming: *Once* (Thousand Islands Playhouse);
The Last Night at the Cabaret Solitaire (Queen's
University and the Dan School of Drama and Music).



WORRELL MCFARLANE

Drums

Played for/with: Divine Brown, Molly Johnson, Joy Lapps-Lewis, Leila Dey, Travis Knights, Quincy Morales and many more.

Notable credits: Soulpepper Theatre: “Billie, Ella & Sarah: Revolutionary Women in Jazz” (Divine Brown, Weyni Mengesha).



EVAN PORTER

Bass

Song Credits: Foreigner, Nonso Amadi; Books, Allan Rayman; Life of the party, Chris Larocca; Do it, Kennedy Rd.

Upcoming: FEQ Opening for Lana Del Rey with Allan Rayman; NXNE with Iamtheliving.

About Nightwood Theatre

As Canada's foremost feminist theatre, Nightwood Theatre is driven by artistic excellence, advocacy, and the successful training and development of women and gender expansive artists. 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.

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Naz Afsahi

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Artist/Activist In Residence

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Nightwood Theatre is a member of the Professional Association of Canadian Theatres and engages, under the terms of the Canadian Theatre Agreement, professional artists who are members of the Canadian Actor's Equity Association. It is a member of the Toronto Alliance for Performing Arts (TAPA) and Theatre Ontario.

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Donations received since January 1, 2022. Last updated on May 9, 2023. If your name has been misspelled or omitted, please accept our sincere apologies, and don't hesitate to reach out to Charlene Wolf, Head of Partnerships and Giving, at charlene@nightwoodtheatre.net.

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Tarragon is generously supported by the Toronto Arts Foundation Resiliency Fund, created to provide support for artists and arts workers who have suffered significant financial loss throughout the pandemic. The Fund was made possible thanks to donations from the Hal Jackman Foundation and The Slight Family Foundation.

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The Rose Directing Fund, developed to continue Richard Rose's vision of bringing excellence to the creation and development of Canadian theatre by celebrating a professional director each season. We are grateful to the individuals whose gifts to this fund will support the future of directors at Tarragon over the next 10 years.

Anonymous (6)

Gayle Abrams OAZ

Sherri & William Appell in Honour of

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Naomi Brown

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We are grateful for donations made by family and loved ones in memory of the following individuals:

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Marie Beattie

Margaret Stevens

Graham Ewart

Gabriel Trevisan

Rickey Fitzerman

Ronald Youd

Urjo Kareda

If we have made any errors in the spelling, listing or omission of your name please accept our apologies and contact

Courtney Fiddis, Director of Development at:

courtney@tarragontheatre.com

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Stage Employees of Tarragon are represented by Local 58 of the International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees.

Tarragon Theatre is an active member of the Professional Association of Canadian Theatres (PACT) and the Toronto Alliance for the Performing Arts (TAPA).

