NightwoodTheatre

2023-2024 ANNUAL REPORT

Nancy Palk in Mad Madge (2024). Photo by Dahlia Katz

Land Acknowledgment

"To acknowledge this land on which we stand is to acknowledge truth. To acknowledge truth is to acknowledge connection and disconnection. To acknowledge connection and disconnection is to acknowledge the Nations who care for our mother. To acknowledge our mother is to acknowledge truth. To acknowledge truth is to acknowledge that truth is at the forefront of the conversation."

- <u>Monique Aura</u>, Oneida Nation (Shared with permission. Originally posted to <u>Whose Land</u>)

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 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 agreement.

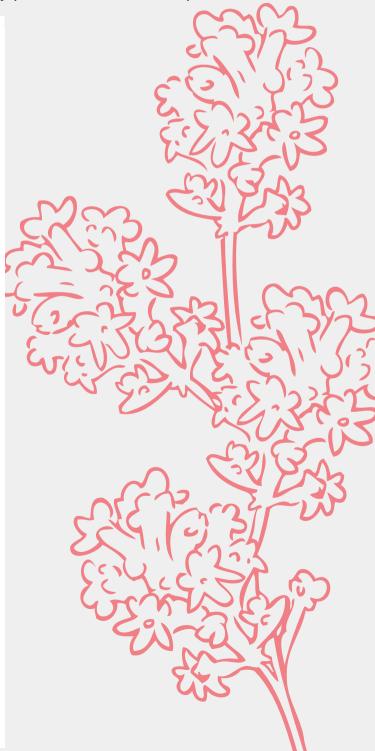




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REPORT FROM THE ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

I'm so proud of our 2023-2024 season.

As an organization, we offered a robust array of bold theatrical experiences, continued deep planning and fundraising for our future home at 877 Yonge Street and continued to propel women and genderexpansive artists and arts workers in their careers.

Fall 2023 began with a bang by opening the season for the esteemed National Arts Centre in Ottawa with our co-produced tour of *The Queen In Me*. We then returned to our grassroots with our annual Groundswell Festival that championed almost a dozen theatre creators including those from our longstanding Write From The Hip program. We collaborated with Tarragon Theatre and Undercurrent Creations with Nikki Shaffeeullah's evocative *A Poem for Rabia*, followed by *Universal Child Care*, commissioned by The Broad Stage, Santa Monica, in association with Nightwood Theatre, Why Not Theatre and the National Art Centre's National Creation Fund, presented by Canadian Stage. This show was a lush choral protest created by Quote Unquote Collective that was celebrated with multiple Dora nominations. Then, in association with VideoCabaret, we produced Rose Napoli's hilarious yet moving contemporary-period mash up *Mad Madge* whose exuberant costumes were recognized with a Dora Award. This piece, directed by myself, was part of a special commission established in my first season as Artistic Director. Lastly, with our support, our 2022-2023 season's beloved presentation of Bad Muse's *Love You Wrong Time* toured to Vancouver Asian Canadian Theatre. It is always so meaningful when productions have a second life in a new community.

We continued to run numerous programs this season such as Rising Moon, Innovators, Write From The Hip, Creatryx and added a pilot program called Dialogue Dolls developed and helmed by Bilal Baig for IBPOC trans women and trans femmes. We also explored offering courses and enrichment opportunities through professional training workshops tied to our productions. All of these opportunities give our various stakeholders an opportunity to belong, flourish and become brave artists and arts workers.

Having met our fundraising goals for construction, work got underway at 877 Yonge Street at the top of 2024. Moving into our new space at the top of 2025 is becoming very tangible! I am so thankful for our deep rooted relationship with Tapestry Opera, and our collaborators at St. Clare's Multifaith Housing, as well as Theatrical Project Manager Remington North, Hilditch Architects and our contractors and team at Struct-Con, and of course, our astounding donors and community and government supporters.

I am grateful to our devoted Board of Directors who continue to support Nightwood as a whole and each of us as individuals on our professional journeys. We accomplished a lot of key foundational work this season that is well timed before our growth spurt with our new space next year. I am in awe of our incredible team who show up so fully each day - as the leaders of tomorrow, I know that our industry will be in great hands. Lastly, I am indebted to Managing Director Naz Afsahi who remains tenderhearted and true through every storm and who inspires me with her capacity to be present, exacting and somehow able

to do three things at the same time at all times. I'm sure there must be two of her. As Canada's preeminent feminist theatre, Nightwood cultivates, creates, and produces extraordinary theatre by women and gender-expansive artists, liberating futures, one room at a time. I hope you feel as proud as I do for being in

Nightwood's orbit.

Andrea Donaldson, Artistic Director

REPORT FROM THE MANAGING DIRECTOR

 The 2023-2024 season was a busy one at Nightwood Theatre! We undertook our regular programming and dove deep into the construction at 877 Yonge St. where we were kept quite busy with meetings with Hilditch Architects, Remington North Services, and our partners at Tapestry and St. Clare's. We also

 brought on two new staff members and welcomed another Metcalf Foundation intern!

> We budgeted conservatively for box office returns and surpassed all of our targets for mainstage productions. Ontario Charitable Gaming Association's cGaming proved to be a success as a revenue source, supporting our artistic productions.

> We thank the public funding bodies, whose support remains deeply crucial to our sector at this time. We were successful in receiving several grants to support our work: Phase Two of the Catalyst and Transformation Fund (CAT); The Community Services Recovery Fund; and utilized the deferred portion of our Ontario Arts Council Project Grant for our presentation tour of Love You Wrong Time to Vancouver. We were also successful in our application to Canadian Heritage's Cultural Spaces Fund towards the construction of 877 Yonge Street.

> Nightwood possesses a dedicated base of donors and continues to be wellregarded by corporate sponsors and foundations. Our largest fundraising effort, The Lawyer Show (June 2024) was a great success with an added matinee performance for a total of 4 performances.

> I am so grateful to Andrea's support as my co-executive and for all of the contributions of our staff and the Board of Directors, and look forward to the future of Nightwood Theatre.

> > Naz Afsahi **Managing Director**



REPORT FROM THE BOARD CHAIR

It is my absolute honour and privilege to serve as Board Chair of Nightwood Theatre. Now in my second year, I continue to be inspired by the organization's ambitious productions and various undertakings in the theatre sector that make us Canada's preeminent feminist theatre.

This season has been an unforgettable year in so many regards for Nightwood. With three co-produced mainstage productions and two tours of previous works to Ottawa and Vancouver, we touched the lives of thousands on a national scale through our stunning, socially relevant works.

We also made great strides towards realizing our new space shared with Tapestry Opera at 877 Yonge Street, garnering unprecedented support from government funders, foundations and individuals in our circles who believe in the importance of the arts having a secure home in our city.

I continued to be in awe of Nightwood's mentorship programs that ran throughout the season and the impact our organization has on dozens of aspiring women and gender expansive theatre artists in this city and beyond. Many folks have come out of those programs and have gone on to be employed by Nightwood and other wonderful companies in this country's theatre sector, demonstrating Nightwood's commitment to propelling emerging artists throughout their careers.

This season, I'm proud of the huge investment brought by the Board of Directors who focused on strengthening our infrastructure by updating our bylaws and numerous policies in addition to developing a robust Board onboarding process and executing the first year of our five-year Strategic Plan. Furthermore, we brought on several skilled new members of the Board who are diverse, passionate and devoted to seeing Nightwood flourish. While demanding, this work has been truly galvanizing for us and will serve as a strong foundation for years to come.

As Board Chair, I am very proud of the exceptional work that is carried out by the small but mighty staff and co-executives at Nightwood Theatre. Their commitment to fiscally conservative visionary thinking and care driven processes are commendable. I look forward to our next exciting season in our brand new venue to welcome in our 45th Anniversary.

Jill Schoolenberg Board Chair



MISSION & VISION

As Canada's preeminent feminist theatre, Nightwood cultivates, creates, and produces extraordinary theatre by women and gender-expansive artists, liberating futures, one room at a time.

OUR VALUES

Our values underpin our approach to relationships and the work we do. They are reflective of the 'how' we do what we do as well as the 'why'.

BOLDNESS - We aim for inspiration, transformation and discovery in our audiences. Our work and work practices are unapologetic and trailblazing, welcoming opportunities for growth.

OPPORTUNITY - Nightwood empowers audiences and artists by giving voice to varying perspectives, offering opportunities for growth, and a space to connect. This value shapes our hiring practices, mentoring and our desire to share knowledge.

INCLUSIVITY - We are committed to producing art that is driven by - and that gives voice to - a multiplicity of identities, prioritizing those equity deserving communities.

INTEGRITY - We believe in transparency and accountability to our supporters, funders, partners, artists and team members. The trust we build in our relationships is everything.

CARE - Nightwood believes in upholding a culture of care, recognizing the value of bringing our full selves to spaces of work and gathering, where the best intentions in others are assumed.

STRATEGIC PLANNING

2023-2028

CREATE

Create stunning & thought-provoking theatre through care-driven processes.

Develop and present extraordinary theatre that prioritizes women and gender expansive folks of multiple intersecting identities, with a strong focus on how we do things.

FLOURISH

Flourish towards a sustainable future.

This goal is focused on Nightwood internally – finance fundamentals, governance, office – mostly financial and workplace culture

MODEL CHANGE

Model change towards an equitable sector.

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Pushing for tangible improvements to working conditions and opportunities in the sector, utilizing an intersectional feminist lens.

ENGAGE

Engage Nightwood's stories and communities.



Deepen community and audience relationships to increase visibility of our work, and depth of engagement with a focus on quantitative metrics.

How Feminism factors into what we do

Feminism is a series of frameworks, ideologies and movements. Specific to each era, region and culture, feminism is ever changing and evolving, with the ultimate goal of a world where women and gender expansive people have complete autonomy over their lives.

NIGHTWOOD USES THE FOLLOWING FEMINIST PRINCIPLES TO ANCHOR OUR MISSION:

REPRESENTATION

Practices that seek to increase the number of women and gender expansive folks, prioritizing those from equity-owed groups, in the creation and presentation of theatre work and in key leadership positions.

PROCESS

Processes that emphasize removing barriers to participation, re-examining hierarchy and relationships to power and creating inclusive spaces for everyone to participate and contribute to the best of their ability.

CARE

Producing feminist works by women and gender expansive folks that prioritizes equityowed groups.

ARTISTIC DEVELOPMENT

Throughout the 2023-24 season, Nightwood propelled the development of many talented established and emerging artists through a variety of commissions, grants, awards, and professional development programs. All of these avenues continue to flourish and reflect a high-demand to be involved with Nightwood.

Our **Playwright Development Accelerator Program**, supported by BMO, helped us assist the development of seven new works, supporting everything from commissioning a second draft to producing a world premiere. More information on each of these pieces is available on page 18-19.

Once again, we were honored to be selected as a Recommender Organization by the **Ontario Arts Council's Recommender Grants for Theatre Creators**. This opportunity enabled us to empower thirteen talented artists as they bring their creative visions to life.



Nightwood's 2024 OAC RGTC recipients. L to R, from top to bottom: Yolanda Bonnell, Katarina Fiallos, Thalía González, Kaylie Kreatrix, breton lalama, Tabia Lau, Shira Leuchter, Marium Masood, Janis Mayers, Hanlon Uafás-Álainn (formerly McGregor), Mariló Núñez, Elizabeth Staples, & Chelsea Woolley

We also celebrated Dr. Rita Shelton Deverell with our **Louise Garfield Award**, an annual cash prize awarded to a mature emerging artist who has come through one of Nightwood's programs.

There continues to be a huge appetite and appreciation for Nightwood's flagship professional development programs. Celebrating it's pilot year, **Dialogue Dolls** played host to three emerging IBPOC trans women and transfemme playwrights. Led by Bilal Baig, the group curated an intimate setting where these artists worked towards completing full length plays. We also championed emerging playwrights through **Write From The Hip** where this season we said goodbye to our 2023 cohort and our Program Director of five years, Donna-Michelle St. Bernard. Taking the reigns, Keshia Palm stepped in as Interim Program Director and welcome five new emerging playwrights to our 2024 cohort. After eight years, the **Nightwood Innovators** program remains a prominent resource for emerging artists to hone valuable producing skills as future arts leaders. This season we pivoted away from our Fempocalypse event and redistributed the funds toward the participants' individual professional development. We are proud to have moved a number of Innovators into deeper experiences with the company, including one working on various learning objectives in sessions with our Managing Director, and another in an Assistant Directing role for the Lawyer Show.

THE QUEEN IN ME September 20 - 30, 2023

(Ottawa Tour)

Nominated for 5 Dora Mavor Moore Awards.

The NAC English Theatre presentation of A Co-Production by Nightwood Theatre, Amplified Opera, Canadian Opera Company, and Theatre Gargantua

After two sensational runs in Toronto and a breakout tour to Belfast, we were thrilled to bring back *The Queen In Me* by interdisciplinary artist Teiya Kasahara 笠原貞野 (they/them), accompanied by pianist David Eliakis (he/him). Combining comedy, drama, and opera, this electrifying show explores the many ways that race, gender, and sexuality are policed in the opera industry. Through the lens of The Magic Flute's iconic Queen of the Night, the show reclaims space for the multitudes of women, trans, and non-binary individuals excluded from the stage, daring to imagine bold new possibilities for the future of the art form and beyond. *The Queen in Me* proudly opened the National Arts Centre's 2023-24 season, launching the inaugural curated season of Artistic Director Nina Lee Aquino.

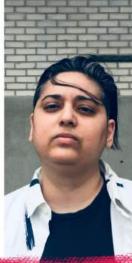
Created & Performed by Co-Directed by Accompanied on Piano by Set & Costume Design by Lighting Design by Projection Design by Stage Managed by Teiya Kasahara 笠原貞野 Andrea Donaldson & Aria Umezawa David Eliakis Joanna Yu André du Toit Laura Warren Troy Taylor

> "A timely and relevant piece that speaks to the power of art to challenge the status quo." — Apt613









GROUNDSWELL FESTIVAL 2023

L to R: Maezy Reign, Whitney French, Yolanda Bonnell, Lara Lewis, Jan Alicia Jennings, and Poonam Dhir

OCTOBER 2 - 5, 2023

Our **38th annual Groundswell Festival** returned live and in-person at Aki Studio to spotlight brand new works from the Write From The Hip playwright's unit (WFTH), led by Program Director **Donna-Michelle St. Bernard** and Program Associate **Jade Silman**. This year also included a reading of a Nightwood-commissioned piece by **Yolanda Bonnell**.

As part of this festival, Nightwood also delivered two free professional development opportunities led by Nightwood staff and incoming Interim Program Director, **Keshia Palm**. Kick-starting our evenings, we hosted a selection of curtain-raiser script samplings from previous **Creatryx 3.0** participants and **Recommenders Grant** recipients.

PLAY READINGS
& EXCERPTS BYYolanda Bo
Jan Alicia JeREADINGS
DIRECTED BYYolanda Bo
Max CameCURTAIN-RAISER
EXCERPTS BYRebecca Ao
Cassandra

Yolanda Bonnell, Poonam Dhir, Whitney French, Jan Alicia Jennings, Lara Lewis, Maezy Reign

Yolanda Bonnell, Marjorie Chan 陳以珏, Max Cameron Fearon, Sedina Fiati, Santiago Guzmán

Rebecca Auerbach, Brefny Caribou, Cassandra Marcus Davey, Krystal Kavita Jagoo Michelle Mohammed, Nikki Shaffeeullah, and Adele Noronha in A Poem for Rabia. Photo by Cylla von Tiedemann

A POEM FOR RABIA

OCTOBER 17 – NOVEMBER 12, 2023

A Tarragon Theatre production In association with Nightwood Theatre and Undercurrent Creations

An epic journey across time, oceans, and tectonic shifts in political history. A Poem for Rabia weaves the stories of three queer women from the same bloodline: Zahra, a disillusioned activist in 2053, navigating a Canada that has just abolished prisons; Betty, in 1953 British Guiana, caught between her new secretarial job at the Governor's office and the growing national independence movement; and Rabia, an Indian domestic worker in 1853, abducted by colonial 'recruiters' and sent sailing from Calcutta to the Caribbean on an indentured labour ship.

Playwright: Nikki Shaffeeullah Co-Director: Clare Preuss Co-Director & Dramaturge: Donna-Michelle St. Bernard Assistant Director: **Becky Ablack** Featuring: Virgilia Griffith, Michelle Mohammed, Adele Noronha, Jay Northcott, Anand Rajaram, & Nikki Shaffeeullah Set Designer: Sonja Rainey Costume Designer: Jawon Kang Lighting Designer: Echo Zhou Composer & Sound Designer: David Mesiha Dialect Coaches: Amani Dorn, Gurkiran Kaur, Andrew Prashad Fight Director: Jack Rennie Stage Manager: Sandi Becker Apprentice Stage Manager: Kayleigh Mundy Additional Dramaturgy: Intisar Awisse & Sasha Tate-Howarth Consulting Creative Producer: Rachel Penny

"Shaffeeullah has a great ear for powerful language and scenes that create tension and moral quandaries." - Ilana Lucas, Broadway World

Virgilia Griffith and Nikki Shaffeeullah in A Poem for Rabia. Photo by Cylla von Tiedemann

UNIVERSAL CHILD CARE

Nominated for 4 Dora Mavor Moore Award & 2 Toronto Theatre Awards

FEBRUARY 14 - 25, 2024

L to R: Mónica Garrido Huerta, Germaine Konji, Norah Sadava, Fiona Sauder, Anika Venkatesh, Takako Segawa, Joema Frith, & Alex Samaras in *Universal Child Care.* Photo: Dahlia Katz

Created by **Quote Unquote Collective** commissioned by **BroadStage, Santa Monica**, in association with **Nightwood Theatre**, **Why Not Theatre** and the **National Arts Centre's** National Creation Fund, presented by **Canadian Stage.**

Witness the sheer power and force of the unaccompanied human voice in the newest work from Quote Unquote Collective. Part concert, part theatre play (and self-consciously neither of those things), the ensemble screams about the lack of affordable child care and growing inequalities while illuminating different approaches to child care around the globe.

"Artful and entertaining... a visual treat" - Globe & Mail (Critic's Pick)

With: Joema Frith, Mónica Garrido Huerta, Germaine Konji, Alex Samaras, Fiona Sauder, Norah Sadava, Takako Segawa, and Anika Venkatesh

Book: Amy Nostbakken and Norah Sadava Music and Lyrics: Amy Nostbakken Story: Akosua Amo-Adem, Vicky Araico, Seiko Nakazawa, Amy Nostbakken, Norah Sadava, and Stephanie Sourial lokes: Monica Garrido Huerta Director: Amy Nostbakken Choreographer: Orian Michaeli Musical Director: Alex Samaras Lighting Designer: André du Toit Set Designer: Lorenzo Savoini and Michelle Tracey Additional Sound Design and Sound Consultation: Matt Smith Projection Designer: potatoCakes_digital Costume Designer: Christine Ting - Huan 挺歡 Urquhart Stage Manager: Tara Mohan Assistant Stage Manager: Victoria Wang Sound Engineer: Jess Forrest Producer: Jenna Harris Workshop Producer & production support: Najla Nubyanluv Consulting Producers: Michelle Yagi and Kelly Read Workshop Devisors: Sturla Alvsvåg, Akosua Amo-Adem, Augusto Bitter, Celia Green, Viktor Lukawski, Kwaku Okyere and Dan Watson Production Supervisor: Crystal Lee 13 Production Manager: Carlos Varela Serra Technical Director: Daniel Bennett Joema Frith & Germaine Konji in Universal Child Care. Photo: Dahlia Katz

April 9 - 21, 2024

Winner of the Dora Mavor Moore Award for **Outstanding** Costume Design

A **Nightwood Theatre** production in association with **VideoCabaret**

Meet Margaret Cavendish, 17th-century philosopher, poet, playwright – a scandalous Jill-of-all-Trades and mistress of none. In her unapologetic pursuit of fame, Madge ditches her dysfunctional family to join the court of an unruly Queen and leave her mark on history.

Paying homage to Jane Austen and Tina Fey in the same breath, this laugh out loud contemporary-period mashup suggests that perhaps a woman's hunger for unbridled attention is not so shallow, after all.

"Napoli writes the world... with a wild and raunchy imagination. The end result, brought to life with gusto by director Andrea Donaldson, is a great time at the theatre, with impressive performances and lovely design to boot."

> - Aisling Murphy, Intermission Magazine

Rose Napoli in Mad Madge. Photo: Dahlia Katz

PLAYWRIGHT ROSE NAPOLI **DIRECTED BY ANDREA DONALDSON** PERFORMED BY ROSE NAPOLI, KARL ANG, WAYNE BURNS, IZAD ETEMADI. FARHANG GHAJAR. & NANCY PALK SET, COSTUMES & PROPS DESIGN BY ASTRID JANSON, ABBY ESTEIREIRO, & MERLE HARLEY DESIGN ASSISTANT MAXIM BORTNOWSKI COSTUMES BUILDERS DES'REE GRAY, JENNIFER PURCELL MARTIN, **JB NELLES, & ALESSIA URBANI** DRESSER TSZ TING LAM LIGHTING DESIGN BY REBECCA VANDEVELDE SOUND DESIGN BY OLIVIA WHEELER ASSOCIATE SOUND DESIGN BY FRANK INCER **STAGE MANAGED BY HANNAH MACMILLAN** SCRIPT SUPERVISOR & PRODUCTION ASST NIKA JALALI PRODUCTION MANAGER MAYA ROYER PRODUCTION CONSULTATION BY PIP BRADFORD **INTIMACY & FIGHT DIRECTION BY CHRISTINA FOX** PRODUCED/PUBLICIZED BY VICTORIA LABERGE COMMISSIONED BY KATE AMESBURY

L to R: Nancy Palk, Farhang Ghajar, Rose Napoli, Karl Ang, Izad Etemadi, and Wayne Burns in Mad Madge. Photo: Dahlia Katz

LOVE YOU WRONG TIME

May 2 - 4, 2024 (Vancouver, BC Tour)

Winner of 2 Dora Mavor Moore awards, with 5 nominations

Vancouver Asian Canadian Theatre in association with Nightwood Theatre presents a Bad Muse Collective production

Love You Wrong Time is a hilarious, no-holds-barred song cycle featuring two friends looking for love while contending with the fetishization of Asian women. Using music, true stories, bar games, and stand up, Deanna H. Choi and Maddie Bautista's inventive, interactive show serves as a battle cry in the wake of mass violence against Asian femmes, creating a space for rage, grief, tenderness and ruthless comedy.

CONCEIVED, COMPOSED & PERFORMED BYDEANNA H. CHOI & MADDIE BAUTISTADIRECTED BY & CREATED WITHERIN BRUBACHERPRODUCTION DESIGN BYHELEN YUNG WITH JUDIE PLAZALIGHTING DESIGN BYKAILEIGH KRYSZTOFIAKWITH ASSOCIATEGIUSEPPE CONDELLOPRODUCTION MANAGEMENT BYGIUSEPPE CONDELLOSTAGE MANAGEMENT BYMICHELLE KWAN

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"Love You Wrong Time is a must-see not just because it is smart, funny and timely – but also because its creators are women who are breaking down societal barriers while cementing their artistic collaboration and friendship." - Sesaya Arts Magazine

Maddie Bautista & Deanna H. Choi in Love You Wrong Time. Photo from Bad Muse Col.

"Love You Wrong Time is sharp, urgent, engaging social commentary" - So Sumi

THE 15TH ANNUAL LAWYER SHOW June 13 - 15, 2024



Music by **Richard Rodgers** | Lyrics by **Oscar Hammerstein II** Book by **Howard Lindsay** & **Russel Crouse** Suggested by **The Trapp Family Singers** by **Maria Augusta Trapp**

The Lawyer Show is Nightwood's main annual fundraiser. Every year, supported by a team of directors, designers and vocal coaches, over 30 members of the legal community rehearse for three months to be able to stage an exhilarating, entertaining, professionally led production.

Since the Lawyer Show's inception in **2010**, some **300 legal professionals** have appeared in **13 shows** to raise more than **\$1,300,000** in support of Nightwood.

The cast of The Sound of Music. Photo: Jeremy Mimnagh

THE SOUND OF MUSIC is presented by arrangement with Concord Theatricals on behalf of The Rodgers & Hammerstein Organization. <u>www.concordtheatricals.com</u>



LAWYER SHOW CREATIVE TEAM

Direction and Choreography by **Sadie Epstein-Fine** Music Direction by **Melissa Morris** Assistant Music Direction by **Alexis Belgrave** Set and Costume Design by **Amanda Wong** Lighting Design by **Rebecca Picherack** Production Management by **Maya Royer** Stage Management by **Ashley Elliott** Assistant Directed & Assistant Stage Managed by **Lee Stone** Production Assistance by **Nika Jalali** Props Assistance by **Andrew Wong**







The cast of The Sound of Music. Photos by Jeremy Mimnagh

LAWYER SHOW CAST

Aliah El-Houni, Community Justice Collective Allison Pressé, Strigberger Brown Armstrong LLP Ally Lawrence, Torys LLP Angela Zhu, OPSEU / SEFPO Ari Sterlin, Artist Management Inc. Astrid Mrkich, Law Society of Ontario Bennett Jensen, Egale Canada Brennyn Watterton, Ministry of The Attorney General Christine Doucet, Ministry of The Attorney General Courtney Edwards, Lerners LLP **Courtney Evans**, TD Bank Danika So, Dewart Gleason LLP Danny Kastner, Kastner Ko LLP David Mills, Mills & Mills LLP Edina Cavalli, TD Bank Elizabeth Moore, Ministry of The Attorney General Garrett Zehr, PIPSC Heather Paterson, Shibley Righton LLP Heidi LeBlanc, Carters Professional Corporation

Jennifer Whincup, Altus Group Joseph Cuyegkeng, Spin Master **Kaja Marinic** Khrystina McMillan, Ontario Securities Commission Laura Precup-Pop, Public Prosecution Service of Canada Leah Cummings, Rayman Harris LLP Leo Salloum, Legal Aid Ontario Lessa Nosko Liz McConkey, JPAK Employment Lawyers Lucie Zhang, Lifetime Developments Matthew Chung, Ministry of The Attorney General Melanie Herbin, Ministry of The Attorney General Olivia Danylchuk, Goldenberg & Co P.C. Richard Chan 陳駿華, CBC / Radio-Canada Rona Ghanbari, Stikeman Elliott LLP Sharlene Atkins, BMO Sheila Gibb, Epstein Cole LLP Tracy Pratt, Fasken Valérie Duchesneau, Ontario Ministry of Finance

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Nightwood Theatre is proud to continue being a home for fostering and supporting new play creation and we are so thankful to be able to do this with the help of the **BMO Playwright Development Acceleration Program**. In our 2023/24 season we were delighted to assist in the development of various works including *The Eighth Fire pt 1: The Great Migration* by Yolanda Bonnell, a workshop of *Enormity, Girl, and the Earthquake in Her Lungs* by Chelsea Woolley, the world premiere of *Mad Madge* by Rose Napoli, and play development of *April's Story* by Hanlon Uafas-Álainn, *Where the Spirits Sit* by Tamara Podemski, and *Weltamultiek* by Lara Lewis.

THE EIGHTH FIRE PT 1: THE GREAT MIGRATION

The Eighth Fire pt 1: The Great Migration promises to be a powerful and impactful play that addresses important issues related to Indigenous rights, reconciliation, and social justice. The piece follows an Anishinaabe community on their 500 year migration as part of a prophecy called the Seven Fires. Time collides as these ancestors simultaneously present themselves to a group of land and water defenders in the future, who are at the precipice of sovereignty and revolution. The themes of the play are both timely and relevant, and Yolanda's voice as a playwright deserves to be heard.

Nightwood has been supporting this work from its inception through a commissioning process and hosted a public reading of it at our Groundswell Festival (2023).

ENORMITY, GIRL, AND THE EARTHQUAKE IN HER LUNGS

Vic has arrived in a women's shelter. She has been told to make the bed and begin an intake. Make the bed, and speak. Yet sharing her story is an intolerable enormity for a brain in crisis. Vic and the six personified parts of her traumatized brain, struggle to confront what has happened to them, and commit to the refuge offered from a system often designed to remove a victim's personal agency over her legal, medical, psychological, and economic choices.

This piece was developed as part of our Write from the Hip program. We recently held a workshop dramaturged and directed by Artistic Director Andrea Donaldson at Tarragon Theatre.

MAD MADGE

Meet Margaret Cavendish, 17th-century philosopher, poet, playwright – a scandalous Jill-of-all-Trades and mistress of none. In her unapologetic pursuit of fame, Madge ditches her dysfunctional family to join the court of an unruly Queen and leave her mark on history. Paying homage to Jane Austen and Tina Fey in the same breath, this laugh out loud contemporaryperiod mashup suggests that perhaps a woman's hunger for unbridled attention is not so shallow, after all.

By having an active dramaturgical relationship with Artistic Director Andrea Donaldson, Rose was able to work through various drafts, ultimately bringing a new draft to a two-day workshop with professional actors and an invited audience. The play had it's world premiere in April 2024.



APRIL'S STORY

April's Story follows what will be the last few years of the life of theatre creator, actor, disability advocate, and organizer of the Halifax Fringe Festival, April Hubbard. Playing with verbatim theatre, Hanlon Uafas-Álainn shares stories of April's impact on disability theatre history from being passed over for acting roles for being in a wheelchair to her two decades of fierce advocacy for the disabled community. Following a dramatic turn in November 2022, April has applied for Medical Assistance in Dying. Our hope is that April's story serves as an important piece of theatre/disability history and a chance to celebrate April's life and work both her art and her advocacy.

We were able to support the research and early creation phase for this playwright. We are now applying for funding for a Creator in Residence through the Ontario Arts Council.

WHERE THE SPIRITS SIT

Where the Spirits Sit is a musical journey based on Tamara Podemski's twelve songs for the twelve moons of the Anishinaabe calendar. Through her soulful melodies and poignant lyrics, Tamara probes the intersection of prayer and performance, asking if it is possible to sing her most deeply personal songs without falling apart. This one-of-a-kind workshop presentation that promises laughter, inspiration and raw vulnerability.

Where the Spirits Sit currently exists as a collection of songs from Tamara's discography. In conversation with Andrea Donaldson, the two are collaborating to shape a performance that incorporates music, text, and audience interaction. Nightwood will help further the development of this piece by presenting public showings of the workshop Winter 2025.

WELTAMULTIEK

On a milestone birthday, Christine begins a spiritual odyssey to get to know her Mi'kmaw and English Ancestors better. Accompanied by her two gayest friends, they embark on a journey of ghosts, metaphors, food and some light domestic terrorism.

This piece was developed as part of our Write from the Hip program and had it's first public reading as part of our Groundswell Festival (2023). Funding was offered to this playwright toward their second draft.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT



Mad Madge Panelists. L to R: Kat Sandler, Rose Napoli, Andrea Donaldson, Weyni Mengesha. Photo by Jade Silman Nightwood's community offerings thrived and expanded in the 2023-24 season. From well-loved returning programs to new professional development offerings, our community's continued appetite shows an ongoing want to connect with Nightwood.

In its fourth year, our **Rising Moon Writing Program** empowered more young writers from across Ontario. Led by the Program Director, Amanda Lin, this free, six-week online course provides aspiring writers aged 16-19 with the tools and guidance they need to flourish.

Due to demand from the prior year, we ran two sessions of our **Creatyx 3.0 program** this season, one in the Fall 2023 and one during the Spring 2024. Creatyx is an eight-week structured program for writers of all levels. Nightwood staff and guest facilitators Sedina Fiati and Keshia Palm hosted a well-loved space for folks across the country to have focused writing time, group feedback, and sharing opportunities.

2023-24 saw a significant infusion of **Professional Development Workshops** that related to our mainstage productions. Our Nightwood staff organized a Hivemind session during the Groundswell Festival to welcome space for collective problem-solving. In advance of the world premiere

of *Universal Child Care*, the duo behind Quote Unquote Collective ran a session on fusing music and physical theatre. Wrapping up the year, Rose Napoli and Nancy Palk taught multi-session playwriting and scene study classes using the Mad Madge script as the source material.

Furthering the community engagement around our shows, we also provided several free Community Events. With A Poem for Rabia, we supported our co-producers at Undercurrent Creations with their Storytelling Indenture: Queer and Feminist Perspectives panel, their Many Waters project to uplift queer Guyanese artists, and a blog post by an emerging Guyanese writer and one of our 23-24 Innovators, Saharah Gaznabbi. Focusing on access and caregiving,



"Comedic Scene Study" workshop. Hosted by Nancy Palk. Photo by Jade Silman

our Universal Child Care activities included a video exhibit on the co-existence of art and parenting by Mothra, babes-in-arms performances, and performances with onsite childcare. Finally, with Mad Madge, we hosted three post-show panels on Sustainable Design, Theatricalizing History, and Intentional MisCasting. We were proud to use these initiatives to dive deeper into our productions with our community while also creating more opportunities to support local artists.

To increase our financial accessibility we had either free or subsidized offerings for all of the above ongoings. During the production of Mad Madge, we also reserved discounted community access tickets at each performance. We strengthened our connection with the community by providing regular updates through our newsletters and Artist List, which offers a wealth of opportunities in the creative field.

A TRIBUTE TO THE NIGHTWOOD INNOVATORS

2023-24 marked our final season of the Nightwood Innovators (formally Young Innovators) program after 8 wonderful years. So many of these emerging artists have gone on to have impressive careers

Residencies.

Innovators,

participants:

2016-2017

Saba Aktar

Veronica Baron

Madeleine Brown

Natalia Bushnik

Li Chen

Sarah Gibbons

Annie MacKay

Shannon Murphy

Faith Paré

Christine Rankin

Michela Sisti

Elizabeth Staples

Liz Whitbread

2021-2022

and



The 2023-24 Nightwood Innovators Top to bottom, L to R: Melissa Avalos, isi bhakhomen, Taija Shonée Chung, Shaharah Gaznabbi, Jill Goranson, Mathilda Kane, Lily Chang, Jade Janzen, Lorna Craig, Eli Holliday, Sarah Yuen, Kass Prus, Lee Stone, and Darnie Tran

2019-2020

Alethea Bakogeorge Arinea Hermans Ciana Henderson Faly Mevamanana Kate McArthur Isabela Solis Lozano Madison Angus Rabiya Monsoor Roxhanne Norman Samantha Megarry Sarah Flicht Sarah Marchand Shohana Sharmin Sicilia Xanath Fuentes

2020-2021

Caitlin Kelly Christine Lee Hazel Moore Jessica Rose Bowmer Kemi King Kiera Publicover Lucy Wong Natasha Ramondino Patricia Cerra Qianna MacGilchrist River Oliveira Robin Luckwaldt Sai Macikunas

Drea Jahnelle Jones Emily Maxwell Alex Cameron Jade Silman Rosiland Goodwin Rahaf Fasheh Gus Monet Abigail Whitney Erin Jones Natércia Napoleão Maria Alejandra Cortes Rebecca Bauer Camille Rogers

2017-2018

to

and lasting relationships with Nightwood. We look forward to how the impact of this program will continue as it evolves into the Nightwood Shadow

Our immense thanks go to **Taylor Trowbridge**, **Sadie Epstein-Fine**, and **Amanda Lin** who were instrumental in the creation, growth, and direction of the Nightwood

the

over

Adriana DeAngelis Andrea Rankin Barbara Martinez Cathy Huang Ellen Denny **Julie** Foster **Justine** Christensen Keshia Palm Lauren Wolanski Lucy McPhee Melissa Tavlor Mirka Loiselle Natalie Liconti **Rachel Mutombo** Samantha Vu **Bryn Kennedy**

2022-2023

A Blaine Carly Anna Billings Eish Van Wieren Elm Reyes Heather Lundrigan Katherine Teed-Arthur Kayla Ado Kiah Francis Kijo Gatama Laura Piccinin Montserrat Videla Riley Ough Sarah O'Brecht Yoanna Joseph

2018-2019

program

100

Amanda Lin Arielle Zamora Brittany Banks Ellie Elwand Emma Welsh Haley Vincent Jasmine Cabanilla Kai Taddei Leah Pritchard Marina Gomes Max Fearon Melissa MacKenzie Rais Clarke-Mendes Rochelle Richardson Shaneill Floyd-Wlazlak

2023-2024

isi bhakhomen Jill Goranson Mathilda Kane Sarah Yuen Melissa Avalos Eli Holliday Jade Janzen Lily Chang Kass Prus Darnie Tran Lorna Craig Taija Shonée Chung Lee Stone Shaharah Gaznabbi



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Collaborator (\$1,000 - 4,999)

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Friend (\$250 - 499)

Arya Afsahi, Krishna Balkissoon, Harriett Grant, Kamala Jean Gopie, Susan Hodkinson, Penny Noble, H. Ian & Dorothy Macdonald, Hogg, Shain & Scheck, Susan Moellers, Tracy Pratt, Tamara Lisa Thomas, Cheryl Tjok-A-Tam, Elaine Wong, Cynthia Zimmerman

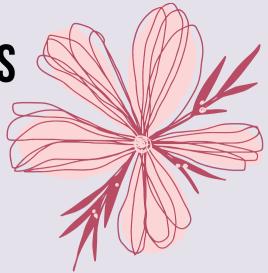
Ally (\$25 - 249)

Anonymous x 24, Azita Gerami & Ahmad Afsahi, Alma Bjelosevic, Margaret Bryce, Danielle Bourgon, Alex Cameron, Naomi Campbell, Jan Caruana, Joan Cranston, BJ Danylchuk, Julia Dickson, John Dalrymple, Anne Morris-Dadson, Barbara Fingerote, Matt Fowler, Catherine Gordon, Jennifer Gold, Lia De Groot, Paula Grgurich, Geoff Kolomayz, Reva Lokhande, Jeanne LeSage, Mary Milne, Robin Mackie, Rosalba Martinni, Dave Mollica, Lorna Niebergall, Eleanor O'Connor, Mary Oko, Mike Payette, Joelle Peters, Smadar Peretz, Colleen Pollreis, Ursula Pflug, Georgia Quartaro, Michael Schechter, Marsha Sfeir, Paula Shewchuk, Alistair Simpson, Imre Szeman, Suzanne Thompson, Delaine Tiniakos-Doran, Victoria Urquhart, Anthea Windsor, Jonathan Warren, Anne Wessels, Hersh Zeifman, Joyce Zemans

Donations received within the 23/24 season up until June 30, 2024. 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 <u>charlene@nightwoodtheatre.net</u>



Click here to make a tax-receiptable donation!



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CONSEIL DES ARTS DE L'ONTARIO



Ontario 🕅



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STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS

Nightwood Theatre Year Ended June 30, 2024

REVENUES	2024	2023
Private sector:		
Donations and sponsorships	\$249,215	\$196,228
Fundraising events	¢249,213 140,561	58,378
Foundations	114,002	88,036
Public sector:	114,002	00,030
Federal	137,500	146,300
Provincial	75,714	83,793
Municipal	117,000	73,000
Government assistance	20,000	-
Earned:	,	
Single ticket sales	36,917	24,266
Other	10,672	7,352
Workshops, classes, events, and co-productions	5,480	-
Fees, commissions and guarantees	2,000	40,494
	55,069	72,112
	909,061	717,847
EXPENSES		
Artistic and programming: Artistic salaries and fees	376,921	291,968
Production and technical fees	30,127	
Venue rental	24,304	39,225 26,093
Production costs	9,411	5,488
Royalties	1,000	2,755
Marketing and development:	1,000	2,155
Fundraising cost	136,892	99,356
Marketing salaries and fees	112,260	120,033
Advertising purchases	7,474	5,365
Other marketing costs	3,775	4,618
Administration:	-, -)
Administration salaries and fees	177,372	167,638
General and administrative costs	28,050	27,692
Amortization	2,485	2,726
Touring	\$-	\$1,507
DEFICIENCY OF REVENUES	910,071	794,464
OVER EXPENSES	(1,010)	(76,617)

THE TEAN

NIGHTWOOD TEAM

Naz Afsahi (Managing Director), Bilal Baig (Program Director: Dialogue Dolls), Andrea Donaldson (Artistic Director), Ashley Elliott (Administrator - Operations & Partnerships), Sedina Fiati (Artist/Activist in Residence), Nika Jalali (Metcalf Foundation Artistic Producing Intern), Jan Alicia Jennings (Program Associate: 2024 WFTH), Tsz Ting Lam (Metcalf Foundation Producer Intern), Amanda Lin (Program Director: Innovators & Rising Moon), Chris Mustard of Young & Associates (Financial Advisor), Keshia Palm (Interim Program Director: WFTH 2024), Donna-Michelle St. Bernard (Program Director: 2023 WFTH), Jade Silman (Artistic Associate & Head of Communications; Program Associate: 2023 WFTH), Angela Sun (Digital Content Manager), Jess Watkin (Accessibility Consultant), Charlene Wolf (Head of Partnerships & Giving)

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