

CANADA,
ON STAGE.
OTTAWA | JUNE 7-15

MAGNETIC
NORTH
THEATRE FESTIVAL

Magnetic North Theatre Festival Unveils 2013 Programme

'CANADA, ON STAGE.'

Ottawa June 7 - 15

Nine Days of Premiere Plays, Parties and Parleys.

A Smorgasbord of the Best in Canadian Theatre.

OTTAWA - Theatre aficionados and arts leaders gathered at the National Arts Centre's Fourth Stage today for the much anticipated unveiling of the **2013 Magnetic North Theatre Festival** programme. The annual festival, which alternates between its home base in Ottawa and other Canadian cities every other year, is back in Canada's Capital and will run June 7-15 at the National Arts Centre, University of Ottawa Academic Hall and Arts Court.

Magnetic North Artistic Director Brenda Leadlay proudly unveiled the programming for the 2013 Festival. "We're thrilled to be bringing Canada's top theatre home to Canada's Capital. You're invited to immerse yourself in nine days of premiere plays, parties and parleys - a smorgasbord of the best in Canadian theatre," she said. Theatre-goers will enjoy fabulous performances and exciting social events and encounters with festival artists. "It's tantalizing theatre, to share and take-away."

The 2013 festival will feature familial stories to savour: **Ravi Jain** and his mother **Asha**, debating the prospect of an arranged marriage whilst sharing warm samosas in **A Brimful of Asha**; renowned actors **Lorne Cardinal** and **Margo Kane** starring in the Western Canada Theatre Production of **For the Pleasure of Seeing Her Again**, acclaimed playwright **Michel Tremblay's** homage to his Métis mother; and **Peter Reder and Valerie Buhagiar** inviting you to their home to share a cup of tea, and revelations about their family history, in **Peter and Valerie**.

Also on the menu are battles won and lost: **VideoCabaret's The War of 1812** - The History of the Village of the Small Huts 1812-15, directed by **Michael Hollingsworth**, set Stratford on fire last summer and is currently slaying capacity audiences in Toronto; **Winners and Losers**, created and performed by **Marcus Youssef** and **James Long** tests the bounds and bonds of friendship in a battle of unlike minds; and recording artist **Hawksley Workman** stars in **The God That Comes**, a rock 'n roll cabaret 2b theatre company production directed by **Christian Barry**, which is a retelling of Euripides' The Bacchae - a rebellious revolution fuelled by wine, ritual madness and ecstasy.

And for further indulgence, what better just desserts than **SubDevison**, a sampler of 10 short site-specific shows staged in Arts Court around the Club SAW FESTIVAL Bar by a collective of independent Ontario theatre companies?

National Arts Centre President and CEO Peter Herrndorf said "The National Arts Centre is proud to co-present the Magnetic North Theatre Festival in the Capital and other cities across Canada. This touring festival of first-class Canadian theatre brings Canadians together to share our stories. It's theatre that moves. And that moves us."

National Capital Commission Chair Russell Mills said "It's wonderful to have the Magnetic North Theatre Festival back in Canada's Capital Region this summer. It's a special opportunity for visitors and residents to come together to experience 'Canada, On Stage'."

Ottawa Mayor Jim Watson said "Magnetic North pulls artists, audiences and presenters together and opens doors for premiere productions to tour across Canada and the world. I'm especially excited about the theatre industry pitches and 'speed-dating' that foster cultural collaboration, investment and access to new markets."

Magnetic North Theatre Festival gratefully acknowledged their co-presenter **National Arts Centre English Theatre**; public funders **Canadian Heritage, Canada Council for the Arts, Ontario Trillium Foundation, Ontario Arts Council**, and **Employment Ontario**; venue partners the **National Arts Centre, University of Ottawa Department of Theatre, Arts Court** and **Ottawa Art Gallery**; and private supporters **Community Foundation of Ottawa, Danbe Foundation, Downtown Rideau BIA, Fifty Strategy and Creative, Andrew Alexander Photography, Clocktower Brew Pub, Palatine Hills Estate Winery, Bridgehead** and **Embassy Hotel and Suites**.

Celebrating its second decade of touring and advancing Canadian theatre, the Magnetic North Theatre Festival is produced by the Canadian Theatre Festival Society and co-presented by the National Arts Centre English Theatre.

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Further information:

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Backgrounder:

Performance Descriptions (Attached).

For Festival Tickets, On Sale NOW:

To Purchase a 4-pack

****For a limited time only! ****

Purchase a 4-PACK and receive a second complimentary ticket to *"For the Pleasure of Seeing Her Again"*, available **exclusively** in person at the National Arts Centre Box Office at 53 Elgin St.

For \$100 you will receive one (1) ticket to the performance of your choice for each of the following productions:

For the Pleasure of Seeing Her Again, The God That Comes, A Brimful of Asha, Winners and Losers

To Purchase Individual Tickets

IN PERSON

Visit the National Arts Centre Box Office at 53 Elgin St. from April 17 until the day prior to the performance of choice. On the day of the performance, tickets can be purchased one hour prior to show time at the performance venue.

Box Office Hours

Monday to Saturday: 10 am to 9 pm

Sundays & Holidays: Closed unless a performance is scheduled, in which case box office is open 2 hours before the start of show and closes 15 minutes after end of performance.

Additional information can be found at www.nac-cna.ca.

ONLINE

Tickets can be purchased by visiting www.ticketmaster.ca/magneticnorth. Additional service charges may apply.

BY PHONE

Tickets can be purchased by calling Ticketmaster at 1-888-991-ARTS (2787). Additional service charges may apply.

TO MAKE A GROUP RESERVATION (Groups of 10+)

Groups of 10 or more can purchase individual tickets at a discounted rate.

To make your reservation please contact Odette Laurin at 613-947-7000 ext. 634, or at grp@nac-cna.ca.

FOR TICKET INFORMATION

Katerina Bondarchuk, Box Office Coordinator

Email: boxoffice@magneticnorthfestival.ca Phone: 1-866-850-2787 or 613-947-7000 ext. 264

A Brimful of Asha

Created by Asha and Ravi Jain

Directed by Ravi Jain

A Why Not Theatre Production

“Everyone has a mother” says Ravi Jain, in explaining the appeal of his latest work. Like a tray of warm samosas, A Brimful of Asha has been selling out at Toronto’s Tarragon Theatre each time a new batch is put out - for each of its three runs over the past year.

Ravi and his mother Asha, who play themselves, are bringing their real-life story to the Magnetic North Theatre Festival this year - of a mother’s dream and a son’s desire to follow his own path.

When Ravi plans a trip to India his mother starts planning, too. Without letting him know, his parents meet him there, armed with details about nice Indian girls they see as potential brides, as well as a newspaper ad proclaiming his availability. But Ravi doesn’t see himself as available, not for marriage.

Ravi promises that no matter what your cultural background, everyone will relate to the generational clash presented in A Brimful of Asha.

“...a warm, fresh piece of theatre....” - Globe and Mail

There are ONLY 4 shows of A Brimful of Asha at the University of Ottawa’s Academic Hall from June 8-10

Reviews

“A Brimful of Asha is full to the brim with loving, personal admissions. It’s both a diatribe against and a tribute to mothers (and their complaining sons).” - NOW Magazine

"A Brimful of Asha...is a runaway hit. The added performances keep selling out, and for good reason."
- Paula Citron, paulacitron.ca

Peter and Valerie

Created and Performed by Peter Reder and Valerie Buhagiar
A Peter and Valerie Production

You are invited to Peter and Valerie's Ottawa home to honour the memory of Frank, Valerie's childhood friend. But is that all he was?

During an intimate evening with Peter, Valerie and their son Bruno, audiences will bear witness to photos, home movies, a slide show and an audio message from Frank's mother - which will be offered along with some tea.

But as the evening unfolds, "guests" discover intimate details of Valerie's and Peter's relationship with each other and of Valerie's relationship with Frank.

The collaboration between Peter Reder and Valerie Buhagiar was born at the Banff Centre for the Arts in February 2012. They had seen each other's work, were intrigued and wanted to work together.

But Valerie lives in Canada, Peter in Britain. Through Skype and 'snail mail' they came up with Peter and Valerie. Thanks to a residency at Cove Park, Scotland and the support of the National Theatre Studio in London, the idea developed into an intimate, site-specific exploration of home, relationships and family.

Steep yourself in this family history.

Peter and Valerie will run from June 8 – 15 at 175 Wilbrod St.

Reviews

"Thank you Valerie Buhagiar and Peter Reder for an intimate, intricate site-specific theatre piece in a Peckham living room. Your craft is exquisite." Louise Walker, from the London preview

The God that Comes

Created by Christian Barry and Hawksley Workman

Directed by Christian Barry

A 2b theatre company Production

Ottawa is not known as a Bacchanalian town.

But performer musician Hawksley Workman and director Christian Barry want to change that...if only for a night.

Four nights of wine-soaked hedonistic revelry mixed with theatre mixed with rock-and-roll. Right here in the nation's capital. And, as Barry says, right on time.

The God that Comes is a retelling of Euripides' The Bacchae. It is the story of a king obsessed with rules and order. But there's a new kid in town (the God of Wine) and the slaves, the women, and the mother of the king himself go to the mountainside to engage in a rebellious, sybaritic revolution fuelled by wine, ritual madness and ecstasy. The king rails against the protestors and - quite literally - loses his head.

2b theatre's Christian Barry noticed parallels to what he read in The Bacchae and what he read in his morning paper and was moved to create something about it. "I've long felt that the human desire to mould yourself to social convention is absurd," he says. He and Workman wanted to collaborate for a long time, but agreed to wait until the right project presented itself. This was it.

Anyone who has followed Workman would recognize the theme of fighting animal urges to conform to societal expectation. It is a frequent refrain in many of his lyrics. But, he'll be the first to unapologetically admit that "my guts and my loins win more often."

Barry stresses that fun is the crux of this anti-morality play. "Ottawa is a place where people don't often indulge in their animal instincts. We'll do what we can to change that. We want them to come out and drink too much and have a good time," he says, adding, "This show makes some really important points...and I don't know if we are bringing Rock and Roll into the Theatre or bringing Theatre into Rock and Roll, but we want to acknowledge those important points in a fun way."

Tantalizing and tempting!

The God That Comes will run from June 8 – 11 at the National Arts Centre Studio.

Reviews

"Whenever or wherever you hear that Workman is presenting *The God That Comes*, be there, or miss the next big thing at your own peril." - Richard Ouzounian, Toronto Star

Winners and Losers

Created and Performed by Marcus Youssef and James Long

Directed by Chris Abraham

A Theatre Replacement and Newworld Theatre Production in Association with Crow's Theatre

James Long admits that *Winners and Losers* is a result of boredom.

The result, though, is anything but.

James Long and his long-time friend Marcus Youssef wanted to write a play about how we define ourselves and how society defines us – as winners or losers. But they got bored with writing. To warm themselves up, they started playing a game. In Russian accents, which allowed them to say whatever came to mind without a filter - “like putting on the clown nose,” Long says - they started a dialogue. They threw out people, places and things – like Tom Cruise, Mexico, microwave ovens - and labelled them. Winner or Loser?

It quickly got dangerous as the friends started discussing and labelling each other. Despite the danger, or maybe because of it, they both saw the potential for this “game” to become something more.

They now play that game, including the friendship-testing conversation about each other, in front of sold-out audiences. No one leaves unaffected, including the actors. Some nights, it takes a while for the sting to ease. But it does. They remain friends.

Long says much of the discussion is still improvised and discussing each other in such an intimate and unscripted way challenges both men as actors and as friends. “We have had to develop ‘safe words’ to ensure that neither of us goes too far. I’ll admit it is usually me who pushes that limit.”

He thinks this show moves people in part because it hits so close to home. “This is a conversation we have all had in our heads about our friends. And ourselves. Just Canadians never do it out loud.”

Now, two of them are.

Unscrupulously satisfying.

Marcus Youssef and James Long will be testing the limits of friendship from June 12 – 15 in Academic Hall at the University of Ottawa.

Reviews

“*Winners and Losers* looks a lot like open-heart surgery. Metaphoric blood is spilled but, strangely, the experience for the audience is exhilarating. The possibility that friendship can survive – or even be strengthened by – such excruciating honesty is inspirational and opens up floodgates of introspection.”

- Jo Ledingham, Vancouver Courier

“The mental sparring is akin to watching a wrestling match... You get caught up as they use the information - dropped so casually earlier in the evening - as weapons. Where it all leads is fascinating.”

- David C. Jones, Charlebois Post

For the Pleasure of Seeing Her Again

Created by Michel Tremblay/ Translated by Linda Gaboriau / Directed by Glynis Leyshon
A Western Canada Theatre Production
Starring Lorne Cardinal and Margo Kane

In this hilarious and heartrending tribute to his mother, Canadian playwright Michel Tremblay has created one of the great female characters in Canadian theatre. Lorne Cardinal, familiar as Sgt. David Quinton, the laid-back cop on CTV's *Corner Gas*, plays the narrator, regaling us with tales about his feisty mother – a born storyteller with a love of exaggeration and invention.

Margo Kane, an award-winning actor and the Artistic and Managing Director of *Full Circle First Nations Performance* and the *Talking Stick Festival* in Vancouver, is every ounce the 1950's homemaker as she irons, scrubs and tugs her husband's underwear through the ringer. Her tongue can be sharp and ruthless but she is the Narrator's most influential teacher. Even though she exasperates the son she so fiercely loves, she proves an inspiration for his art and the one to awaken his artistic passion.

For the Pleasure of Seeing Her Again is a loving portrait, a midlife Valentine's card from Michel Tremblay to his late mother, who died of cancer before he rose to prominence. Margo Kane's performance as his long-suffering, but highly imaginative mother, highlights the imperfection of all mothers. Her startling authentic portrayal is underpinned with love and intelligence and the humanity that inspired one of our greatest living playwrights.

A story to savour.

Reviews:

"Kane and Cardinal are naturals, assuming their roles with an ease that reveals the hand of director Glynis Leyshon." - Mike Youds, The Daily News, Kamloops.

"This play features two of the country's most talented actors (Kane and Cardinal) performing a work that... is proof — if any is actually needed — that Michel Tremblay is Canada's best living playwright." – Dale Bass, Talon Books

The War of 1812

- The History of the Village of the Small Huts 1812-15

Written and Directed by Michael Hollingsworth
A VideoCabaret Production

It's a two hundred year old war story, but VideoCabaret's presentation of *The War of 1812* is fresh and feisty. "When America declares war on Britain and her empire, a Native confederation led by the Shawnee chief Tecumseh defends its own territory by joining in the defence of Canada. After three years of bloodshed on land and lake, the Yankees have burned York, the Yorkees have burned Washington, and everyone has burned the Natives." – From the Video Cabaret website.

The War of 1812 is a new addition to Michael Hollingsworth's 21-part play-cycle, *The History of the Village of the Small Huts*, which satirically covers Canada's history from Chief Donnacona and Jacques Cartier to Brian Mulroney. Staged in VideoCabaret's innovative 'black-box' style, *The War of 1812* features eight actors portraying more than fifty-five characters, including Sir Isaac Brock, John Strachan, Laura Secord, Tecumseh, James and Dolly Madison and General Winfield Scott.

This inventive and innovative company's work has received twenty-four Dora Mavor Moore Awards, and scores of Nominations including 2012: Outstanding Production, Direction, Acting Ensemble, Lighting, Costumes. In 2011, Michael Hollingsworth was awarded the Silver Ticket for outstanding contribution to the development of Canadian theatre.

The War of 1812 set Stratford on fire last summer and is currently playing to capacity audiences in Toronto.

Hot and Saucy!

Arts Court Theatre will be the front lines for the brave Video Cabaret troops for the duration of the Festival, June 7 – 15, with an extra presentation on June 6. But there are only 11 performances and many of them are sure to sell out. Get your tickets early so you won't be disappointed.

Reviews

"A knockout...The writing (by Michael Hollingsworth) is pungent, the staging (also by Hollingsworth) is brilliant, the set and lighting (Andy Moro) are superbly precise and economic, the costumes (Astrid Janson) are even more superbly garish." – National Post

" a rollicking, radical, rambunctious retelling of the history of Canada...a stunning achievement...I've seen nothing quite like [their approach] in many years of theatre-going...do yourself a favour, old chum. Come to the VideoCabaret." – Robert Crew, special to The Star

"a cross between Spitting Image and the theatre of Bertolt Brecht...it's a rollicking good ride."
- The American Conservative

SubDevision

The SubDevision Collective independent theatre companies from across Ontario

Site specific performances around a party that brings artists and audiences together.

Magnetic North is pleased to bring you SubDevision with the support of the Ottawa Community Foundation and a donation from Barbara Crook and Dan Greenberg of the Danbe Foundation.

For three nights, our Club SAW FESTival Bar will turn into a hub for 10 short site-specific shows that will pop up in all the corners of Arts Court, each piece performed over 8 times each evening. That's a lot of opportunities to catch companies from Ottawa, Toronto and Saint Catharine's premiering new work inspired by site. But you have to be savvy to catch them all – some perform for audiences as small as 3.

From Dora-award winning clowns Morro and Jasp performing in a storage closet, multi-disciplinary ladies Deluxe Hot Sauce getting cosy in a kiosk, the international touring company STO Union creating in a library without books, Toronto performance artist Cathy Gordon solving the world's problems in a lush boardroom, to local favourite up-and-comers May Can Theatre cooking up madness in a galley kitchen - SubDevision promises a theatre tapas to suit any taste buds!

The 2012 local SubDevision companies **Deluxe Hot Sauce, May Can Theatre, STO Union, Counterpoint Players, Skeleton Key, Ottawa Stilt Union** and **Gruppo Rubato** are pleased to be joined this year by independent artists from across Ontario -**Cathy Gordon**, sister companies **Fixt Point** and **Suitcase in Point**, and **U.N.I.T production's Morro and Jasp**.

SubDevision was inspired by Vancouver's Hive events – small pieces of theatre around a party with beer seemed like a win-win format. Last year, a collective of local artists collaborated on the inaugural SubDevision in a church just steps from Arts Court. The sell-out nights were evidence that audiences appreciate a platform for the creation of new work in Ottawa.

A sociable theatre sampler.

The SubDevision showcase runs June 12-14, at Club SAW in Arts Court.

Reviews:

"Featuring some of the most innovative, exciting, and achingly beautiful live theatre you could hope for, SubDevision is a paradigm shift in local cool. My soul feels about ten times normal size after experiencing this joy of a night, and if I sound like I'm gushing, I'm not. I'm just telling it like it is." - Kevin Reid (The Visitorium)