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FRINGE

NEXT STAGE



U-R-U

Presented by:
Questionmark-Exclamation Theatre

The Solitudes



photo: Tanja Tuziana

*eight recipes for transforming our solitudes,
and an invitation to sit at the table*



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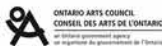
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Harbourfront Centre Theatre

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HAPPY 2020!

Our little theatre festival is now a teenager. In this 13th year of Next Stage, we are presenting a clearer vision than ever before. This line-up offers you personal stories, incredible writing, a full musical, and a Fringe-fave clown duo.



I am so honoured to be able to share this work with you from this passionate group of artists who have worked so hard to bring you their shows. I hope you can pack in as much theatre as possible over the next 12 days and join us for our Fringe Fundraiser, a one-night-only event with Tallboyz, another #StartedAtTheFringe success story, on Saturday Jan 11th at 7:30pm. We will also have treats for everyone in the heated Steam Whistle Festival Tent and a late night party in the Studio theatre so come by then or any other night to say hi to myself and the Next Stage crew.

May this be the start of a 2020 filled with theatre and joy.

All the best,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Lucy'.

Lucy Eveleigh
Executive Director



It gives me great pleasure to extend greetings and a warm welcome to everyone attending the Next Stage Theatre Festival hosted by Toronto Fringe.



Now in its 13th year, the Next Stage Theatre Festival features 11 visionary shows that showcase a vision of innovative styles and formats and represent a vanguard of indie theatre makers in Toronto. These shows range from staged readings to fully realized productions that offer an enriching program while keeping the indie spirit alive.

I am delighted that wonderful events like yours are taking place in Toronto. Events like this festival promote and encourage residents to participate in their community, connect with each other and contribute to the community's strength.

On behalf of Toronto City Council, I wish everyone an enjoyable and memorable event. Please accept my best wishes for continued success.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'John Tory'.

John Tory
Mayor of Toronto



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NEXT STAGE

U-R-U

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by **Julia Lederer**

Director	Heather Marie Annis*
Projection Designer	Montgomery Martin
Sound Designer	Maddie Bautista
Stage Manager	Ellen Brooker
Producer	Johnnie Walker

Featuring

Kaleb Alexander*
Akosua Amo-Adem*
Rebecca Applebaum*
Alison Deon*
Kat Letwin*
Michael Musi
Nicole Power*
RH Thomson*
Jennifer Villaverde*

**appearing courtesy of CAEA*

JULIA LEDERER, Playwright

An internationally acclaimed playwright, Julia's work has been performed across North America and in Europe. Her films have also traveled widely, including *It's Nothing*, which premiered at TIFF. She's adapting her 2013 Next Stage/Fringe hit, *With Love And a Major Organ*, into a feature film.
www.julialederer.ca

HEATHER MARIE ANNIS, Director

Heather is a director, writer, performer, and "Morro" of the Dora Award and Canadian Comedy Award winning clown duo Morro and Jasp. She has directed youth & community productions through Mixed Company Theatre, Howland Academy, and YPT. Upcoming: workshop of *Pest Me, Pet Me* (Animacy Theatre Collective). You can see Heather in *Morro and Jasp Save The Date* at Next Stage.

KALEB ALEXANDER, "Jo"

Select credits: *Pass Over* (Obsidian), *Hamlet / All's Well That Ends Well* (Canadian Stage), *Adventures of a Black Girl in Search of God* (National Arts Centre/Centaur), *Delicacy* (Theatre Brouhaha), *The Marquis of O* (Red Light District), *Hercules* (COC). Upcoming: *Hamlet, Much Ado About Nothing & Wolf Hall* (Stratford).

AKOSUA AMO-ADEM, "Dominator"

Selected credits: *School Girls; Or, The African Mean Girls Play* (Obsidian/Nightwood), *Tartuffe* (Canadian Stage), *A Streetcar Named Desire, For Colored Girls...*, *Father Comes Home From The Wars I, II, & III*, and *The Crucible* (Soulpepper), *Venus' Daughters* (Obsidian), *Domesticated* (Company Theatre). Catch her on season 4 of *Kim's Convenience* in 2020.

REBECCA APPLEBAUM, "Mo"

Rebecca Applebaum's recent acting credits include *Coroner, Broken Branches, Odd Squad, Save Me, and Hot Cuts*. She also directed the premiere of Julia Lederer's play *Reality Theatre*, then went on to direct the short film adaptation *Spooning*, which has screened internationally. Rebecca also sometimes writes plays and makes music.

ALISON DEON, "Emily/Two"

Theatre credits include performances at the Stratford Festival, Mirvish, Thousand Islands Playhouse, Western Canada Theatre, Sudbury Theatre Centre, Gateway, Magnus, Touchmark and Resurgence. Off stage, Alison has appeared in and voiced many commercials and works as a dialect coach, privately and for various theatre companies. She also teaches for George Brown College's Theatre Program.

KAT LETWIN, “Marty/Stage Directions”

Kat Letwin is a Dora Award winner whose credits include: *Chasse Galerie* (Kabin/Storefront/Soulpepper), *Featherweight* (Brouhaha), *Confederation Pts 1 & 2* (VideoCabaret/Soulpepper), and several collaborations with Kat Sandler. She performs at Comedy Bar, Bad Dog, and The Social Capitol Theatre and can be seen in International Emmy award-winning *The Amazing Gayl Pile* (CBC/Amazon Prime).

MICHAEL MUSI, “Dr. Gall”

Michael Musi is an actor, writer and producer based in Toronto. He played Tim in *Noises Off* at The Segal Centre (directed by Jacob Tierney) and originated roles in three Kat Sandler plays: *Retreat*, *Liver* and *Late Night*. He plays Terence on *Kim’s Convenience* (CBC/Netflix). Upcoming: *Odd Squad* (PBS).

NICOLE POWER, “Helen”

Theatre: *Wedding*, *Sisters*, *Chasse-Galerie* (Soulpepper Theatre), *Evangeline* (Charlottetown Festival), *La Cage Aux Folles* (Neptune Theatre); *Macbeth* (SBTS); *Bonnie and Clyde* (Echo). FILM & TELEVISION: *Kim’s Convenience*. OTHER: Nicole is a graduate of Sheridan College, Second City Conservatory, and the Soulpepper Academy. Canadian Screen Award Nominee: Best Supporting Actress in a Comedy.

RH THOMSON, “Big Al”

RH Thomson has always been an arts activist and advocated for the *International Convention on Cultural Diversity* that was adopted by UNESCO in 2005. In the last ten years, he has directed his energies towards both climate and commemoration. He will soon appear in Ellie Moon’s *This Was The World* at Tarragon Theatre.

JENNIFER VILLAVERDE, “Dr. Hallie”

Jennifer Villaverde is a Filipinx-Canadian actor & arts educator. Selected theatre credits include *Wedding at Aulis*, *Animal Farm*, *Alligator Pie*, *As You Like It*, *The Threepenny Opera* (Soulpepper); *James and the Giant Peach*, *Hana’s Suitcase*, *Seussical*, *A Year With Frog and Toad*, *Blue Planet* (YPT); *Vietgone*, *Top Girls* (RMTC).

MONTGOMERY MARTIN, Projection Designer

Recent credits include: *Morro and Jasp in Stupefaction* (Kabin/U.N.I.T. Productions), *Riverboat Coffee House: The Yorkville Scene* (Soulpepper); *A Moveable Feast: Paris in the 1920s* (Soulpepper); *Out the Window* (Luminato). *Hook Up* (Tapestry/Theatre Passe Muraille). He co-hosts *Dungeon Dudes*, a YouTube channel dedicated to tabletop roleplaying games. www.dungeondudes.com

MADDIE BAUTISTA, Sound Designer

Maddie has created work for Luminato, RISER, Theatre Passe Muraille, Aluna, b current, rEvolver, and High Performance Rodeo. She was nominated for a Dora for her sound design in *Eraser* (RISER). She won the NOW Magazine's Audience Choice Award for co-creating *4inXchange* in her performance art duo xLq. www.maddiebautista.com

ELLEN BROOKER, Stage Manager

Selected credits: Stage Management for *A Christmas Carol* (Soup Can Theatre), *Siranoush* (CorpOLuz/Caminos Festival); Scenic Design and Build for the Newmarket National Play Festival; Assistant PM/TD for foldA 2019, a digital arts festival (SpiderWebShow); Design Assistant for *Small Wonders* (Punchdrunk). Upcoming: Assistant Designing on *Brain Storm* (Lucid Ludic/Why Not Theatre).

JOHNNIE WALKER, Producer

Johnnie has produced shows for Blarney/Bustle & Beast, AnimalParts, Accidental Mechanics, Theatre Plexus, & Nobody's Business Theatre. His solo show *Redheaded Stepchild* was published by Playwrights Canada Press. His play *Shove It Down My Throat* premiered at Buddies in Bad Times in 2019. www.johnniewalkerartist.com

NOTES ON THE PLAY: A hundred years ago, Karel Čapek published *R.U.R.*, and coined the term "robot" (derived from the Czech work for "forced labour" or "drudgery"). Long before computers, Siri, and even the first Roomba, Čapek imagined how powerful A.I. could become. Czech playwrights have a distinct ability to ask vital questions using the theatrical and imaginative, to communicate the tragic through absurd and comedic means. Just as Čapek reflected his world, in *U-R-U* I have sought to reflect our own. Though the two plays are linked, no knowledge of *R.U.R.* is needed to understand *U-R-U*.

THANK YOU: Adam Barrett and East End Arts, Michela Cannon, Marie Beath Badian, Nina Lee Aquino, & Factory Theatre.



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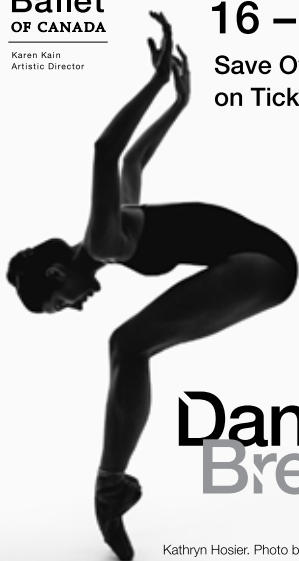
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