

Toronto Fringe Announces
2022 Next Stage Theatre Festival
January 19-30, 2022

The next stage of Next Stage
A hybrid of digital and in-person events at the Ada Slight Hall at Daniels Spectrum

(December 9, 2021) **Toronto Fringe** is proud to announce exciting and expansive programming as part of the 2022 **Next Stage Theatre Festival**, taking place January 19 – 30, 2022 at the Ada Slight Hall at Daniels Spectrum in Toronto. This will be the first time that Toronto Fringe has been able to present in-person offerings since January 2020.

The 2022 **Next Stage Theatre Festival** will host a hybrid of six live theatre and four digital offerings, including dance, live music, gaming, stand-up comedy, traditional theatre and more. Next Stage welcomes a curious audience who are ready for fun, satirical and challenging shows with themes around identity, aging and desire.

For fourteen years the **Next Stage Theatre Festival** has been a winter tradition for theatre goers to gather. Toronto Fringe looks forward to bringing this warm atmosphere to Daniels Spectrum with the Steam Whistle Lounge, a lobby space for reuniting before and after the live performances.

“Next Stage has always been synonymous with “beginning” for me. The beginning of a new year, of new relationships with creators I didn’t know before, and the audiences who are beginning to discover them,” said Lucy Eveleigh, Executive Director of Toronto Fringe. “This year is no exception but it is definitely layered with something even more, the beginning of a new way of existing in this new world that has been so deeply altered for so many of us. The fact that we can come together again to experience theatre is an honour and a thrill, and we look forward to welcoming you back to our festival.”

The 2022 Next Stage Theatre Festival Line-Up:
In Alphabetical Order

Bremen Town

Written by Gregory Prest

From the Bremen Town Collective

Part of the Theatre Series at Ada Slight Hall

After forty-five years of hard work and dedication, Frau Esel, the longest serving housekeeper of Völksenhaus, has been fired and sent out to pasture. *Bremen Town* is a rural folk

tragicomedy about what happens when we out live our use, starring award-winning actors **Nancy Palk, Oliver Dennis, William Webster, and Deborah Grover.**

The Complex

Created by Chantal Forde, Jessie Fraser, Mandy Roveda

From It's Not a Pivot Productions

Part of the Digital Series

Set in a post-apocalyptic, dystopian world, The Architects have devised a procedure to overcome the imperiling disintegration of society: you, a cross-section of survivors must collaborate in the selection of a worthy new leader. *The Complex* is an interactive digital theatre experience that invites audiences to share virtual space and directly impact the fate of the new world.

Heart of a Dog

Written by Mohammad Yaghoubi

From Nowadays Theatre Company

Part of the Theatre Series at Ada Slight Hall

Heart of a Dog is a comical adaptation by Iranian playwright **Mohammad Yaghoubi**, based on a novel of the same name by the classic Russian writer Mikhail Bulgakov. In this English premiere, the main character (the dog) will be performed by a woman, which would not be possible in Iran, where a woman's body is a political matter. Previous productions in Iran struggled with censorship, but now living in Canada far from the harassment of the censorship bureaus, Yaghoubi can pursue his creative vision and direct this piece any way he sees fit.

Saving Wonderland

Created by Attilio Rigotti, Kevin Hammonds, David Andrew Laws, Jacob Thompson, Sarah Reynolds, Caroline Prugh

From Gamiotics Studios

Part of the Digital Series

What happened to Wonderland after Alice returned home? In this innovative, interactive adventure, audiences are plunged back down the rabbit hole where the familiar turns peculiar in a race to find missing gears, restore Wonderland, and save the day. With numerous endings, the live choices of each audience control the story to turn back the hands of time over and over again.

She's Not Special

Created by Fatuma Adar

Company: HomeMadelt Productions

Part of the Theatre Series at Ada Slight Hall

She's Not Special is musical theatre/stand-up hybrid about impossible expectations for model minorities. As a Black Muslim Woman (a triple threat!) **Fatuma Adar** wants to free viewers from the pressure of Black Excellence. Co-directed by Adar and **Graham Isador**, *She's Not Special* is a musical theatre/hip-hop/comedy hybrid exploring the pressure of Black Excellence.

Stand Up Comedy Night

Created by Nick Reynoldson, Dena Jackson, Adrienne Fish, Monty Scott, Todd Graham & Efthimios Nasiopoulos

From Comedy Records

Part of the Theatre Series at Ada Slight Hall

Comedy Records, Canada's first record label dedicated to releasing stand up and sketch comedy albums, presents an evening of hilarious stand-up comedy featuring hometown comics. Each night audiences will share laughs with notable comedians with a wide range of styles including **Nick Reynoldson, Dena Jackson, Adrienne Fish, Monty Scott, Todd Graham** and **Efthimios Nasiopoulos** plus special guests.

Stories of a Dish

Created by Himanshu Sitlani

From Nautanki Bazaar

Part of the Digital Series

A global pandemic may have struck, but here is a person who's just stuck! He wants to win the world over with his cooking, but will he be able to? He's got to face isolation, earn acceptance and, most importantly, get groceries delivered. Will he find the secret recipe to happiness? A culinary theatrical journey awaits, in this innovative solo show inspired by the popular *Stories of a Dish* video series on Instagram.

The Sunglasses Monologue

Created by Vivian Chong

Part of the Digital Series

The Sunglasses Monologue is a play about being seen and embracing life every step of the way. Through humour, original songs, storytelling, and refreshing perspectives, this intimate one-woman-show from Blind artist and writer **Vivian Chong** takes audiences through an emotional journey of finding bravery, vulnerability, and optimism in the face of uncertainty.

Tango in the Dark

Directed by Alexander Richardson

From PointeTango

Part of the Theatre Series at Ada Slaight Hall

PointeTango Dance Company and **Payadora Tango Ensemble** come together to bring the magic of live music and dance to Next Stage. *Tango in the Dark* is an award-winning show created and performed by Alexander Richardson and Erin Scott-Kafadar that combines the precision of ballet on pointe with the passion and intimacy of Argentine tango with live music throughout.

Ursa: A Folk Musical

Created by Jake Schindler and Sam Boer

From Ursa Productions

Part of the Theatre Series at Ada Slaight Hall

What happens when a small-town Ontario teenager runs off into the forest in search of adventure? Why, she meets an anxious bear in the midst of an identity crisis, of course! Combining the joys of a folk concert with the timeless wisdom of a folktale, *Ursa: A Folk Musical* weaves a whimsical story of star-crossed friendship. This unforgettable exploration of the anxieties and euphorias of young adulthood is full of fresh and surprising folk tunes performed by a live band.

The Next Stage Theatre Festival is generously supported by Ontario's Ministry of Heritage, Sport, Tourism, and Culture.

Toronto Fringe is a grassroots, charitable organization that runs the Toronto Fringe Festival each July, the Next Stage Theatre Festival each January, and various year-round programs that benefit youth, emerging artists, BIPOC artists, artists with disabilities, and the performing arts community at large. Embedded in Fringe's operations are the values of Access, Accountability,

Creativity, Exploration, and Support. [SEP] [SEP]

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Ada Slaight Hall at the Daniels Spectrum [SEP] [SEP]

585 Dundas Street East [SEP] [SEP] [SEP]

In Person Tickets [SEP]

Single Tickets: \$20 plus fees [SEP]

6 Show Pass: \$100 plus fees [SEP]

Digital Tickets [SEP] [SEP]

Single Tickets: \$15 plus fees [SEP]

[SEP] 4 Show Pass: \$50 plus fees

Full Festival Pass (In Person and Digital)

\$140 plus fees [SEP] [SEP]

[SEP] Tickets and Passes On Sale Now at

<https://fringetoronto.com/next-stage/tickets-passes>

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