

## Toronto Fringe Announces New Digital Festival and Details for 2022 Next Stage Theatre Festival

*The new digital Primetime Festival takes place this fall and the 2022 Next Stage Theatre Festival offers a hybrid of digital and in-person events*

**September 20, 2021 (Toronto, ON)** Toronto Fringe is excited to announce a full slate of digital and in-person programming for the 2021/2022 season. The organization has been busy over the last 18 months, redefining its place and purpose in the community. Since the COVID-19 pandemic began, Toronto Fringe has offered three digital festivals: The 2020 Fringe Collective, the 2021 Next Stage Community Booster, the recently wrapped 2021 Digital Toronto Fringe Festival; plus, a variety of youth programs, community conferences, and other resources to support the thousands of struggling independent artists in the Fringe community. The organization is now moving onto an exciting new chapter this fall, taking its expertise in digital theatre and fusing it with the in-person experiences Fringers miss so dearly.

**Thanks to funding from Canadian Heritage, Toronto Fringe is pioneering a new festival this fall called The Primetime Festival, which features five digital theatrical experiences.** The goal of this festival is to provide financial support and a producing platform to Fringe artists who are ready to offer digital, interactive experiences to audiences. Each show will have a digital venue on Fringe's gather.town platform, with some shows using this venue as their performance space and others using it as an imaginative lobby space for pre- and post-show exploration. The Primetime Festival runs from October 30 – November 28, 2021 on [fringetoronto.com](http://fringetoronto.com). Tickets will be Pay What You Can and will go on sale on October 14, 2021. Read full show listings below.

**Toronto Fringe is also excited to announce the return of in-person events as part of the 2022 Next Stage Theatre Festival.** 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 be a hybrid of six in-person and four digital offerings, with the in-person events taking place at the Ada Slaughter Hall at the Daniels Spectrum in Regent Park. The festival runs from January 19 – 30, 2022 and tickets will go on sale on December 8, 2021. This festival will be generously supported by Ontario's Ministry of Heritage, Sport, Tourism, and Culture.

After over a decade of festivals at Factory Theatre, Fringe will be sad to say goodbye to such a long-term venue partner for Next Stage; however, the Fringe Festival will return to the Factory Theatre in the summer of 2022. This winter, the festival looks forward to building new relationships with the community in Regent Park. The new venue allows festival organizers to implement rigorous COVID-19 safety protocols, with increased lobby space and modern air ventilation systems.

Please read on to learn about all ten shows in the 2022 Next Stage Theatre Festival's line-up, as well as all five shows in the Primetime Festival's line-up.

## Primetime Festival Line-Up

### Djinn Joint

Created by Velvet Wells

From Velvet Duke Productions

**About the show:** After almost a million requests, dJerald is on the verge of retiring from Wish Fulfillment. Come join the Djinn as he grants life changing wishes, tells 1,001 tales, and tries to manage wish returns in song. What will you do when your wish is granted? *The Djinn Joint* is an interactive virtual production developed and starring Velvet Wells. Utilizing gather.town's browser streaming technology, audience members can experience the world of *Djinn Joint* before and during the show, including making a wish of their own.

Learn more about the artist: [www.thevelvetduke.com](http://www.thevelvetduke.com)

### Project-a-Sketch

Created by Chloe Ziner, Jessica Gabriel

From Mind of a Snail Puppet Co.

**About the show:** Shadow theatre duo, Mind of a Snail, has constructed a magical portal in their living room, and they want to invite you in! Featuring live music, a multi-camera set-up, overhead projectors, and delightful use of interactive technology. You're in good hands with this award-winning Fringe company (*Multiple Organism, Caws & Effect*) as they take you on an interactive and surreal adventure.

Learn more about the company: [www.mindofasnail.org](http://www.mindofasnail.org)

### Tita Power

Created by the Tita Collective

From the Tita Collective

**About the show:** *Tita Power* is a love letter to a community; specifically, to the female elders the artists lovingly call Tita. The show explores the struggles and heartaches of this ultra-talented collective, and how they cope through humour, storytelling, and songs. Audiences may have caught this multi-award winning, multidisciplinary all-Filipina collective in *Tita Jokes*, at the 2020 Next Stage Theatre Festival.

Learn more about the company: [www.titacollective.com](http://www.titacollective.com)

## With Love and a Major Organ (The Audio Play)

Written by Julia Lederer

**About the show:** Anabel gives her heart to a stranger on the subway and he disappears with it. George is on the run but keeps getting distracted by romantic comedies and feelings he's never had. Mona is getting therapy from GoogleShrink to feel more connected. Then a stranger appears on her doorstep in search of a missing heart. A funny and wildly original exploration of emotion in the age of technology – about what it costs to give your heart away and what happens when you discover you have one.

After international acclaim, *With Love and a Major Organ* returns to the Toronto Fringe, marking the first time the full script has been performed by Canadian artists.

Learn more about the artist: [www.julialederer.ca](http://www.julialederer.ca)

## Constellations

Created by Jacqui Du Toit

From Origin District Theatre

**About the show:** A mesmerizing storytelling experience from international theatrical and movement storyteller Jacqui Du Toit. From Kimberley, South Africa, and now based in Ottawa, Jacqui Du Toit is known for animating stories from her motherland. Join us as this acclaimed artist takes you on a journey into the imagination and beyond.

Learn more about the artist: [www.facebook.com/8thGenerationAfricanStorytelling](https://www.facebook.com/8thGenerationAfricanStorytelling)

# Next Stage Theatre Festival Line-Up

## The In-Person Series

*Shows in this series will take place at the Ada Slight Hall at the Daniels Spectrum in Regent Park.*

### Bremen Town

Written by Gregory Prest

From the Bremen Town Collective

**About the show:** Bremen Town is a rural folk tragedy with humour. After forty-five years as housekeeper of Völksenhaus, Frau Esel is sent out to pasture. *Bremen Town* is a story about what happens when we outlive our use.

## Heart of a Dog

Written by Mohammad Yaghoubi

From NOWADAYS THEATRE

**About the show:** The English premiere of *Heart of a Dog* is a comical adaptation of Mikhail Bulgakov's classic Russian novel. Staged twice in Iran, the piece struggled with boundaries and censorship; now, in Canada, Yaghoubi, far from the harassment of the censorship bureaus, can pursue his creative vision in directing this piece any way he sees fit. In this third approach, the most crucial change is that the main character (the dog) will be performed by a woman who would not be allowed to do so in Iran, where a woman's body is political.

Learn more about the company: [www.nowadaystheatre.org](http://www.nowadaystheatre.org)

## She's Not Special

Created by Fatuma Adar

Company: HomeMadelt Productions

**About the show:** *She's Not Special* combines musical theatre, hip-hop, and comedic storytelling to explore the pressures of Black Excellence. As a Black Muslim Woman (a triple threat!), creator Fatuma Adar is on a mission to free you from the clutches of exceptionalism and teach you how to relish in the joys of mediocrity.

Learn more about the artist: [www.fatumaadar.com](http://www.fatumaadar.com)

## Stand Up Comedy Night

Created by Nick Reynoldson, Arthur Simeon, Dena Jackson, Adrienne Fish, Monty Scott, Todd Graham & more

From Comedy Records

**About the show:** Enjoy a fun evening of stand up comedy featuring hilarious hometown Toronto comedians. Comedy Records artists are award-winning professionals, who can be found topping the charts on iTunes Comedy and Google Play. Headlining at comedy festivals across North America, these comedians have been seen on: SiriusXM, LOL Network, Crave, CBC, Just for Laughs, Canadian Comedy Awards, and The Junos.

Learn more about the company: [www.comedyrecords.ca](http://www.comedyrecords.ca)

## Tango in the Dark

Directed by Alexander Richardson

From PointeTango

**About the show:** Your senses will be delighted by an award-winning show that lights the way through the shadows and mysteries of Buenos Aires, and tells a story of two dancers moving to the rhythms of the city night.

PointeTango's sultry duo will wow you with fantastic lifts, exciting spins, and the passion of Argentine tango with a unique twist: tango on pointe! Featuring original music by Toronto's Payadora Tango Ensemble.

Learn more about the company: [www.pointetango.com](http://www.pointetango.com)

## Ursa: A Folk Musical

Created by Jake Schindler and Sam Boer

From Ursa Productions

**About the show:** Combining the joys of a folk concert with the timeless wisdom of a folktale, *Ursa: A Folk Musical* weaves a whimsical tale 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. What happens when a young, small-town Ontario woman runs off into the forest in search of adventure?

Learn more about the company: [www.ursamusical.com](http://www.ursamusical.com)

## The Digital Series

*Shows in this series will take place online at [fringetoronto.com](http://fringetoronto.com).*

## The Complex

Created by Chantal Forde, Jessie Fraser, Mandy Roveda

From It's Not a Pivot Productions

**About the show:** Set in a dystopian world after years of upset and division, The Architects have devised a procedure to overcome the imperilling disintegration of society. Part immersive theatre, part reality television, and part competitive dystopian fantasy, *The Complex* invites you to share virtual space and directly impact the outcome of the event. Audience members will be chosen to come together and, under the watchful eye of the anonymous Chamber, must collaborate collectively in the selection of a worthy candidate to lead us all to better days.

## Saving Wonderland

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

From Gamiotics Studios

**About the show:** Wonderland is in trouble and it's up to the entire audience to save it! Powered by Gamiotics, audience members join together to play Alice in this fantastical re-thinking of the popular classic. Harnessing the power of their smartphones, audience members will interact with beloved characters, work together to solve mind-bending puzzles, and search for missing gears from the White Rabbit's watch to save Wonderland.

Learn more about the company: [www.gamioticsstudios.com](http://www.gamioticsstudios.com)

## Stories of a Dish

Created by Himanshu Sitlani

From Nautanki Bazaar

**About the show:** 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.

Learn more about the company: [www.nautankibazaar.ca](http://www.nautankibazaar.ca)

## The Sunglasses Monologue

Created by Vivian Chong

**About the show:** *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 Vivian Chong takes audiences through an emotional journey of finding bravery, vulnerability, and optimism in the face of uncertainty.

# About the Festivals

## The Primetime Festival, presented by Toronto Fringe

October 30 – November 28, 2021

- Online at [fringetoronto.com](http://fringetoronto.com)
- Tickets will be Pay What You Can in support of Toronto Fringe
- Full listings available and tickets on sale October 14, 2021

## **The Next Stage Theatre Festival, presented by Toronto Fringe**

**January 19 – 30, 2022**

- A hybrid festival of in-person and online shows
- In-person events will take place at the Ada Slaight Hall at the Daniels Spectrum in Regent Park
- Online events will take place on [fringetoronto.com](http://fringetoronto.com)
- Full listings available and tickets on sale December 8, 2021

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