

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

IN THE SPIRIT OF RECONCILIATION, THEATRE CALGARY ACKNOWLEDGES THAT WE LIVE, WORK AND PLAY ON THE TRADITIONAL TERRITORIES OF THE BLACKFOOT CONFEDERACY (SIKSIKA, KAINAI, PIIKANI), THE TSUUT'INA, THE ÎYÂXE NAKODA NATIONS, THE MÉTIS NATION (REGION 3), AND ALL PEOPLE WHO MAKE THEIR HOMES IN THE TREATY 7 REGION OF SOUTHERN ÁLBERTA. THEY WERE THE ORIGINAL OCCUPANTS OF THIS LAND AND CONTINUE TO BE HERE TO THIS DAY. THEATRE CALGARY IS GRATEFUL TO HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO PRESENT IN THIS TERRITORY.



Oki/Kwe/Hello, friends!

Welcome to Page to Stage! Over the past week I've had the honour to bear witness to the creative process of three incredible playwrights from Mohkinstsis/Calgary, and collaborators across Turtle Island/Canada, who's work reflects a genuine belief in stories that offer healing, love and joy. I'm thrilled to present a festival of stories rooted in the Land. Family. The Ancestors. Faith. Memory. Dream. The Spirit World.

In the call for submissions I asked for stories that reflect the Queer Landscape of Alberta. I wanted this festival to showcase stories that reveal the topography and the people beneath everything that's been built on this land. In the land there is healing, and if people are going to find healing in the theatre we should be stripping away the concrete and drywall, not reinforcing it. These three plays do just that. They are transformational stories. They strip away the concrete and drywall and reveal people connected to place. To land. To healing.

This past year has been defined by a worldwide sickness. Let's define the coming one with stories of healing.

Together.

Wela'lin/Iksookaapi/Thank you.

I'm so glad you're here.

Zach Running Coyote

ARTISTIC ASSOCIATE FESITVAL CURATOR



presents

BOLLYWOOD BASEMENT BOUTIQUE

BY **SHARANPAL RUPRAI**

DIRECTOR DRAMATURG ROHIT CHOKHANI VICKI STROICH

PRIYA BRAZZA NIMM'S MUM RAVI BRAZZA

CHANDNI APPADURAI VEENESH DUBOIS OASIM KHAN

NIMM KRISTEN PADAYAS

THEATRE CALGARY GRATEFULLY ACKNOWLEDGES THE SUPPORT PROVIDED BY THE CITY OF CALGARY THROUGH CALGARY ARTS DEVELOPMENT, THE GOVERNMENT OF ALBERTA THROUGH THE ALBERTA FOUNDATION FOR THE ARTS, THE GOVERNMENT OF CANADA THROUGH THE CANADA COUNCIL, CANADIAN HERITAGE, AND ALL CORPORATE AND PRIVATE CONTRIBUTORS.





















presents

AWOWAKII

BY **SABLE SWEETGRASS KATOIYISSA**

DIRECTOR

DRAMATURG

TROY EMERY TWIGG

VICKI STROICH

JOSEPH TWO GUNS

RICHIE TWO GUNS

ROSIE RUNNING EAGLE

TONY STANDS ALONE

CHRISSY TWO GUNS

BARRY BILINSKY

ELIZABETH FERGUSON-BREAKER

CHARLENE HELLSON

JAY NORTHCOTT

MARSHALL VIELLE





presents

AGÁPI STI FURY

BY MATTHEW OLIVER VAN DIEPEN

DIRECTOR CONRAD BELAU
DRAMATURG VICKI STROICH

ENSEMBLE

CHRISTOPHER HUNT ANGEL LO MICHAEL ROLFE ARI ROMBOUGH JAMIE TOGNAZZINI





SHARANPAL RUPRAI (she/her) PLAYWRIGHT - BOLLYWOOD BASEMENT BOUTIQUE

Sharanpal is an Associate Professor of Women's and Gender Studies at the University of Winnipeg. Her début poetry collection, *Seva* was shortlisted for the Stephan G. Stephansson Award for Poetry by the Alberta Literary Awards in 2015. Her second collection, *Pressure Cooker Love Bomb*, was shortlisted for the prestigious 2020 Annual Lambda Literary Awards, the Robert Kroetsch award for poetry, the Lansdowne Prize for Poetry and was the Goldie Finalist for Poetry. She is an editor for Contemporary Verse 2: The Canadian Journal of Poetry and Critical Writing (CV2). Sharanpal Ruprai was the 2019-2020 Canadian Writerin-Residence at the University of Calgary.



SABLE SWEETGRASS KATOIYISSA (she/her) PLAYWRIGHT - AWOWAKII

Sable Sweetgrass Katoiyissa is Blackfoot and a member of the Kainai Nation, born and raised in Calgary/Mohkinstsis. Sable is a mother and an Awowakii (transgender) storyteller dedicated to the growth and success of the local Indigenous arts community in Mohkinstsis and Treaty 7 Territory. She graduated from the English program at the U of C and received her MFA in Creative Writing from the Institute of American Indian Arts in Santa Fe, New Mexico. She has written an award winning short story and essay, written and performed on stage for *Making Treaty 7*, and created a short film titled *IPOWAHSIN* at Home. Sable lives and works in Calgary/Mohkinstsis.



MATTHEW OLIVER VAN DIEPEN (they/them) PLAYWRIGHT - AGÁPI STI FURY

Oliver is a small-statured, large-hearted non-binary performer and amateur playwright creating queer art whenever possible. Raised on the stage, they have performed and worked with various professional and amateur companies including Gwaandak Theatre, Arts Commons, Play Between Your Thighs, Fake Mustache Drag Troupe, Rosebud Theatre, and MCS Theatre. They have been writing since they were young and have recently begun dreaming about happiness and queer love being freely represented onstage.

VICKI STROICH (she/her) FESTIVAL DRAMATURG

Vicki Stroich is a Calgary based dramaturg, facilitator, and community builder. She worked with Alberta Theatre Projects for over 16 years and has dramaturged over 50 new plays. She launched the National Playwrights Retreat with the Caravan Farm Theatre. She is a former program director for the Playwrights Colony at The Banff Centre. She has a BFA Drama from University of Calgary and received a Betty Mitchell Award for Outstanding Achievement for her work on new plays.

ZACH RUNNING COYOTE (he/him) FESTIVAL CURATOR

Zach is a playwright, actor, musician and screenwriter. He has worked as a creator and collaborator at Lunchbox Theatre, Making Treaty 7, Rosebud Theatre, The Stratford Festival, and Canada's home for new play development: Tarragon Theatre. Adopted at six months old, with Mi'gmaq and settler ancestors, Zach's work focuses on stories for the displaced and disenfranchised, the marginalized and oppressed, as he continues his own search for community, healing and the unwinding of generational trauma.

ROHIT CHOKHANI (he/him) DIRECTOR - BOLLYWOOD BASEMENT BOUTIQUE

Rohit is an arts curator, director and a cultural leader based in Vancouver, B.C. Some of his accomplishments include: Bard on the Beach's All's Well That Ends Well (Co-creator, Co-director - Critics' Choice Innovation Award nomination), Bombay Black by Anosh Irani (Director - Pick of the Fringe award), Finalist for Crow Theatre's RBC Rising Star Emerging Director Prize (2021), Vancouver Now Representation and Inclusion award (2018), Jessie Richardson Theatre Award for Significant Artistic Achievement - Large Theatre (2017), Bollywood star Shiamak Davar's Vancouver Community Award (2017).

CHANDNI APPADURAI (she/her) PRIYA BRAZZA - BOLLYWOOD BASEMENT BOUTIQUE

Chandni grew up loving the atmosphere and magic of Theatre. Her father owned, produced and directed a theatre group called Curtain Club in India, which produced highly acclaimed period plays by Oscar wilde, GB Shaw, JB Priestly among others. She started out as a stage hand and advanced to playing major roles. Chandni played a lead role in the highly successful *The Untold Legend Of Imagen Flight* last year. She also played a part in the online production of *The Wrong Bashir*. She had the time of her life playing Mrs. Erlynne in *Lady Windermere's Fan* produced by Theatre in the Country in Jan 2021. She is very excited and grateful to be playing Priya in *Bollywood Basement Boutique*.

VEENESH DUBOIS (she/her) NIMM'S MUM - BOLLYWOOD BASEMENT BOUTIOUE

Sharanpal is an Associate Professor of Women's and Gender Studies at the University of Winnipeg. Her début poetry collection, Seva was shortlisted for the Stephan G. Stephansson Award for Poetry by the Alberta Literary Awards in 2015. Her second collection, Pressure Cooker Love Bomb, was shortlisted for the prestigious 2020 Annual Lambda Literary Awards, the Robert Kroetsch award for poetry, the Lansdowne Prize for Poetry and was the Goldie Finalist for Poetry. She is an editor for Contemporary Verse 2: The Canadian Journal of Poetry and Critical Writing (CV2). Sharanpal Ruprai was the 2019-2020 Canadian Writer-in-Residence at the University of Calgary.

QASIM KHAN (he/him) RAVI BRAZZA - BOLLYWOOD BASEMENT BOUTIOUE

Qasim is an award-winning actor who has spent the last four seasons starring in shows at the Stratford Festival. He has also worked across the country with NAC, ATP, Citadel, Theatre Passe-Muraille, Soulpepper, Buddies, Videofag, Charlottetown Festival, Canadian Stage, and Musical Stage Co. He can be seen in the upcoming Disney feature Sneakerella, Stratford HD's film version of Henry VIII, and he is currently the host of The Early Modern Cooking Show. Follow @theqasimkhan

KRISTEN PADAYAS (she/her) NIMM - BOLLYWOOD BASEMENT BOUTIOUE

Kristen is a South Asian, 1st generation, mixed race actor, producer, and activist currently residing on Treaty 7 territory. She is a graduate of Grant MacEwan College's Theatre Arts Program and the University of Alberta's Bachelor of Fine Arts Acting Program. She was most recently seen in *Sherlock Holmes & the Raven's Curse* (Vertigo Theatre) and *S.I.S.T.E.R.* (The Fox Den Collective). She is an Associate Producer with Chromatic Theatre (Calgary).

TROY EMERY TWIGG (he/him) DIRECTOR - AWOWAKII

Troy is Blackfoot from the Kainai Nation. He has worked as an actor, dancer, choreographer, director, dramaturg and instructor. He has most recently worked with Quest Theatre; Anthem for the Banff Centre; Niitahtaastsi for Jupiter Theatre; Lilies for Buddies in Bad Times Theatre; Why Not Theatre; Lemon Tree Creations; Sal Capone, The Lamentable Tragedy of... for the National Arts Centre; Iniskim for the Canadian Academy of Mask and Puppetry/NAC and is currently working on projects with Closet Freaks for Stage Left and the Great Canadian Theatre Company and Quest Theatre.

BARRY BILINSKY (he/him) JOSEPH TWO GUNS - AWOWAKIL

Barry Bilinsky is an Alberta-based theatre artist of Metis/Cree descent originally from Edmonton, Alberta in Treaty 6 territory. His work spans several disciplines, as a theatre Director, Writer, and Clown-based Performer, as well as along the spectrum of community driven projects to professional theatre. Barry is the Artistic Director of Fool Spectrum Theatre, a clown-based theatre company in Alberta, as well as an Artistic Associate with liniistsi Treaty Arts Society, Alberta Aboriginal Arts, and the Making Treaty 7 Cultural Society. A graduate of the University of Alberta's Bachelor of Arts program, Barry focuses on creating work with diverse communities through various art disciplines.

ELIZABETH FERGUSON-BREAKER (she/her) RICHIE TWO GUNS - AWOWAKII

Originally from Siksika Nation, Elizabeth is a proud Niitsitapi from both Treaty 7 and Treaty 8 territories. Liz has studied at the University of Lethbridge's Bachelor of Fine Arts program, where she specialized in performance. Aside from the arts, Liz shares a passion of politics and community development. She was chosen as one of 70 Indigenous women across Canada to represent her riding and take a seat within the House of Commons on the 100th anniversary of International Women's Day.

CHARLENE HELLSON (she/her) ROSIF RUNNING FAGI F - AWOWAKII

Charlene Hellson is a queer urban Indigenous femme from the Siksika Nation, and mother and grandmother to her beautiful artist girls. She became an accidental in university and found herself onstage at the High Performance Rodeo in Assimilating Richard, directed by Troy Emery Twigg. Since that time she has been blessed to be on many stages with beautiful and talented Indigenous actors. Charlene is beyond pleased to be involved with Awowakii. Long live Queer Indigenous Theatre!

JAY NORTHCOTT (they/them) TONY STANDS ALONF - AWOWAKII

Jay Northcott is a multidisciplinary artist; director, playwright, burlesque dancer, and producer. Jay works to decolonize their art and practice with storytelling, movement, and gesture to create a foundation for their work. They continue to grow and make it their mission to continue to unlift projects that put BIPOC Queer artists in the spotlight. Upcoming Productions: ENBY Ensemble (Cahoots Theatre), Grapehead (York University), White Muscle Daddy (Pencil Kit Production), Blacktop Sky (Obsidian Theatre).

@Nervousshipwreck

MARSHALL VIELLE (they/he) CHRISSY TWO GUNS - AWOWAKII

Marshall is an Actor, Director, Podcaster, and Drag Performer from the Kainai Nation. They work as an advocate for diversity in the performance sector, while lending their creativity to several Queer Youth initiatives. Their play Where the Two-Spirit Lives is a one-person show encompassing storytelling, movement, and fabulous lip-syncing as a way of celebrating themselves as a Fat, Femme, Queer, Savage! Marshall is the recipient of the 2018 Theatre Calgary Stephen Hair Emerging Actor Award.

CONRAD BELAU (they/them) DIRECTOR - AGÁPI STI FURY

Conrad is a non-binary, hard-of-hearing award-winning queer director and actor. They are known for their one person performance of *Mono Man Mia*, for which they won Broadway World's "Vocalist of the Decade". Other directing credits include *Bright Lights* (Theatre BSMT); *Zoo* (Reckless Daughter Creative); *Cock* (ACT); and were the TC Mentee for *Noises Off* (Theatre Calgary). They thank Carly Simon, Dolly Parton, Bruce Springsteen & Alix Cowman for being the perfect pandemic partners.

CHRISTOPHER HUNT (he/him) ENSEMBLE - AGÁPI STI FURY

Christopher is thankful for his many opportunities over the years with Theatre Calgary. His first professional show was Twelfth Night, which opened the Max Bell Theatre in 1985. Recent TC appearances include: The Scarlet Letter, Twelfth Night (2018) and The Audience. Christopher received the 2018 Harry and Martha Cohen Award for his significant and sustained contribution to the Calgary theatre community. He's also received several of Calgary's Betty Mitchell awards for his acting.

ANGEL LO (she/they) FNSFMBI F - AGÁPI STI FURY

Angel is an actor from Calgary, AB, and is so darn excited to be a part of this festival! Selecttheatre credits include: Eva in The Seven Stages of Isolation (Blue Light Festival), Nearly Wild in Concord Floral (Theatre 44), Juliet in Romeo and Juliet, and Catherine in Proof (Ryerson School of Performance).

MICHAEL ROLFE (he/him) FNSFMBI F - AGÁPI STI FURY

Michael is a queer improviser, writer and performer in Calgary and most recently acted as the co-writer and creator of *Between Us* with Handsome Alice Theatre. As an actor for the Student Writer's Group at ATP this summer, he helped showcase the new written work of young Albertan artists. In that same spirit of creation, he can't wait for the Southern Alberta community to recognize and enjoy the talent of so many queer artists!

ARI ROMBOUGH (they/them) ENSEMBLE - AGÁPI STI FURY

Ari Rombough is an actor, drag performer, emcee, and sometimes writer based in Alberta. Having previously appeared in season one, two (and soon season three) of *JANN* on CTV, Netflix's *Black Summer*, the indie horror thriller *Red Letter Day*, and playing on stages from Theatre Calgary to the Orleans in Las Vegas, Ari continues to pursue the arts on film, on stage, and most recently by putting pen to paper.

JAMIE TOGNAZZINI (she/they) FNSFMBI F - AGÁPI STI FURY

Jamie T is a queer transdisciplinary artist, specializing in vocal performance/musical theatre, physical theatre/circus, and puppetry. Jamie was a featured artist for the 35for35 Who Are You Now? project at the 2021 High Performance Rodeo. Select theatre credits include Giant (GRT), A Christmas Carol (Theatre Calgary), Catalyst Theatre's Fortune Falls, The Drowning Girls (Vertigo), and One Yellow Rabbit's Moon, Moon No Moon, and Calgary, I Love You but You're Killing Me.

THANKS & ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Theatre Calgary extends a special thank you to The Calgary Queer Arts Society.

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WE THANK THE FOLLOWING FOR MAKING THIS FESTIVAL POSSIBLE

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