



Centre for Drama, Theatre & Performance Studies
UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

Festival
of
Original
Theatre

FOOT

31



February 9-11, 2023

Book of Abstracts

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About FOOT 2023

Festival of Original Theatre

The Festival of Original Theatre (FOOT) is the annual conference held by the Centre for Drama, Theatre, and Performance Studies at the University of Toronto. Organized by graduate students at the Centre, its goal is to provide scholars and artists an outlet to showcase, critique, review, perform, discuss, and analyze the changing world of drama, theatre, and performance.

We Live Together

The 31st annual Festival of Original Theatre (FOOT) conference at the University of Toronto's Centre for Drama, Theatre, and Performance Studies invites proposals to our conference "We Live Together" taking place February 9-11th, 2023.

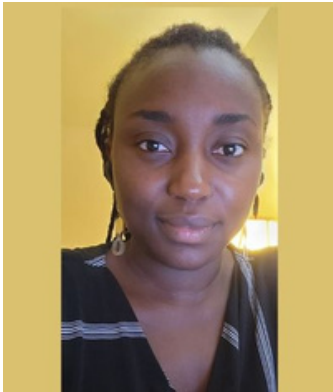
"We Live Together" is as much a question as a mission statement. This phrase suggests broad responsibility to each other, to the sciences, to supporting movements toward social justice, to realizing indigenous protocols, to engaging with economics, and to fighting for ecosystems.

Together prompts us to grapple with a variety of contradictions between individuality and community, hospitality and hostility, and solidarity and exclusion. Working within these contradictions, we call on performance to create spaces in which we can imagine ways to live a future together. Together as human beings who, despite individuality, desire to connect with one another and with other species in virtual and physical spaces. Together as new communities emerge to demand equity, recognition, and conversation. Together across national and political borders. Together across disciplinary and institutional barriers. Together as lives on a planet facing challenges that require global actions for survival.

We are interested not only in the what, but the how: How do we story-tell and world-build in the academy and outside of it, in theatre spaces and communities, in the virtual and IRL worlds? How do we begin not only to imagine, but also to enact new modes and models of being and living together?

We invite engagements which consider the interactions of bodies, presences, communities, ecologies, economics, and ecosystems, as well as conversations around life and liveness, community and public life, persistence, and survival. We encourage critical reflections on togetherness, the common/commons/undercommons, and conversations around who is included in "we."

About the Organizers



Funmi Cole is a PhD Student at the Center for Drama, Theatre and Performance Studies, University of Toronto. She has a master's in drama therapy and is passionate about using theater and performance techniques to foster human development. Funmi has initiated and executed Drama Therapy projects among various populations in different countries. She is interested in the research and practice of applied theatre and her current research explores the narrative construction of personal experiences among African immigrants through playback theatre.

Ilana Khanin is a PhD candidate at the Centre for Drama, Theatre and Performance Studies. Her SSHRC-funded research examines the intersection of art, performance, and blockchain technology.



Evan Moritz is a PhD student at the University of Toronto's Centre for Drama, Theatre and Performance Studies. He is interested in the outer limits of science-fiction and fact with performance and research exploring the future of Indigeneity and settler colonialism, global catastrophe on Earth and off, utopias, dystopias, and the impact of science fiction on contemporary practices. His ongoing performance project, Deep Time Network, blurs the lines between sci-fi storytelling, research, music, and podcasting to explore these themes.

Yizhou Zhang is a PhD student at the Centre for Drama, Theatre and Performance Studies, University of Toronto, with a BA in Classical Studies and Comparative Literature from King's College London. Her research focuses on modernism, twentieth-century and contemporary theatres, and theatre in the history of ideas. She is also a theatremaker whose works capture systems of oppression in everyday life through dialectical images.



Useful Information

Respect and Safety

While the contents communicated and distributed by presenters during the conference are not controlled or endorsed by FOOT or CDTPS, we as part of the University of Toronto community strive to maintain a place where all members of our community feel they belong, are respected, and can thrive. We urge the presenters and attendees to comply with the University of Toronto community values to create a welcoming and inclusive place for each other.

For relevant University policies and resources, please consult:

[Equity Office](#)

[SGS Policies and Guidelines](#)

[UofT Code of Student Conduct](#)

Accessibility

Stairs

Unfortunately, the Helen Gardiner Phelan Playhouse (Second Floor, UC Union Building) is only accessible by stairs because the elevator is currently in repair. If you have accessibility needs, please contact the FOOT Organizers at foot2023.cdtps@gmail.com and we will arrange assistance.

We apologize for any inconvenience this may cause.

Washrooms

A single-user all-gender washroom is located on the ground floor of the UC Union Building. You can find more single-user all-gender washrooms close to the conference in Whitney Hall (85 St George St, M5S 2E5) and Sir Daniel Wilson Residence (73 St George St, M5S 2E5).

Campus Map

To find buildings, food services, washrooms, and other facilities, please consult the [UofT St George Campus Interactive Map](#).

Keynote Lecture



SARAH BAY-CHENG
York University

We Other Digitarians: The History of Intermediality & the Changing Face of "We"

Dr. Sarah Bay-Cheng is the Dean of the School of the Arts, Media, Performance & Design and Professor of Theatre & Performance Studies at York University. Her presentation will ask who is the 'we' of today, and more importantly, who gets to say so? This talk breaks down key ideas in the conference core terms: 'we,' 'live' (both verb and adjective/adverb), and 'together' within both performance theory and practice from the perspective of intermediality in theory and practice. Beginning with a nod to Foucault's opening to *The History of Sexuality*, Vol. 1, this talk looks (briefly!) at the history of intermediality as discipline, subject, and practice as forerunner to contemporary ideas of theatre and our ever-changing audiences.

Sarah Bay-Cheng is Dean of the School of the Arts, Media, Performance & Design and Professor of Theatre & Performance Studies at York University in Toronto, Canada. Her research explores intersections among theatre, performance, and media including theatre and film history, digital historiography, and technology in performance. Her publications include four books, most recently *Performance and Media: Taxonomies for a Changing Field* (2015). Bay-Cheng has been a Fulbright Scholar in Media and Cultural Studies at Utrecht University in the Netherlands and a founding co-host for *On TAP: A Theatre & Performance Studies Podcast*. More information: sarahbaycheng.net.

Keynote Performance



KEVIN MATTHEW WONG

Broadleaf Creative

Why Not Theatre

Benevolence

Intimate, playful, dynamic and surprising, Kevin Matthew Wong (The Chemical Valley Project) presents *Benevolence*, a new work-in-progress solo show about legacy, identity, and the preservation of stories. *Benevolence* examines and celebrates the history of the Hakka (客家) diaspora in Canada - from their 2000-year migration, to their struggles and triumphs as early Chinese-Canadians, to their present struggles with cultural preservation.

Kevin Matthew Wong (he/him) is a Hakka Chinese-Canadian theatre creator, facilitator, performer and producer who creates, collaborates, consults across a wide spectrum of artists and organizations -- from gritty collectives in Toronto's indie performing arts scene to some of the largest theatres in Canada, to international organizations and presenters in the USA, UK, Macau and Germany. Kevin is the co-founder and Artistic Director of Broadleaf Theatre, a company that merges environmentalism and live performance. His documentary-theatre solo-performance *The Chemical Valley Project* - a collaboration with co-creator Julia Howman and Aamjiwnaang First Nation Water Protectors Vanessa Gray and Beze Gray - tackles environmental racism in Canada. Kevin has collaborated with companies such as Theatre Passe Muraille, Cahoots Theatre, the Macau-Toronto music theatre company Music Picnic, the Shaw Festival, Stratford Festival, and the American social justice residency The Gardarev Center. Kevin is also a Senior Producer and Artistic Associate at Why Not Theatre, leading its MAKE platform including projects and tours such as *What You Won't Do For Love* and the World Premiere of *Mahabharata*. kevinmatthewwong.com

Credits

Kevin Matthew Wong - Lead Creator, Director, Writer, Performer, Projection Designer. **Echo Zhou** - Set and Lighting Designer. **Chris Ross-Ewart** - Composer and Sound Designer. **Noel Pendawa** - Video Associate and Editor. **Sooji Kim** - Production Stage Manager. **Yizhou Zhang** - Dramaturgical Support. **Broadleaf Creative & Benevolence Collective** - Producers.

Voice Over Artists: **Sonia Chin** - VO, Sonia Chin. **Pat and Larry Williams-Chung** - VO, Karaoke.

ABHIMANYU ACHARYA

University of Western Ontario

Hopscotch

Performance

A piece that deals simultaneously with the experience of indigenous children in residential schools in Canada as well as climate change.

Abhimanyu Acharya is an award-winning playwright, short story writer and translator who writes in English, Hindi and Gujarati. He won a national award for his collection of stories in Gujarati and has been long listed thrice for Toto awards for creative writing in English. He has been published at places such as Out of Print, Hakara, Karvaan India, and Gulmohar Quarterly. He is currently a doctoral candidate in comparative literature at The University of Western Ontario. Reach him on Instagram @: abhimanyuacharyaa

Asha P. is a performance and literary artist who started writing, acting and dancing while still in school. A firm believer in the positive impact of artistic activities on mental health and emotional wellbeing, she champions the cause of arts in mental health. She is the author of 2 bestselling poetry books. Her works have also been published in multiple magazines and co-authored books. As an actor and director, she has worked in many theatre productions and films. Her vocational calling also includes a notable career in marketing and communications which she is currently executing in the not-for-profit and arts sector. Her motto is “there is always hope”.

Tushar Dalvi has been an independent theatre maker since 2016. He has created immersive intimate performances for public, private and corporate events across India. He has performed and organized more than 300 shows of all his productions together. He has trained and acted in Bombay and UK, and also has experience with stage management, stage building, lights and other stage aesthetics.

Ana Persijn Alarcon is a multidisciplinary artist from Toronto and a graduate of the vocal performance studies from Western University. Her selected theatre credits include: *The Sound of music* (Drayton entertainment), *The importance of being earnest* (SOLT), *Hopscotch* (First steps theatre), *Catch me if you can* (King’s players), and *Hamlet* (Western theatre studies). She can be reached @anabea.ap

Isha Misra is an 18-year-old emerging theatre artist and filmmaker, based in Toronto, Canada. She is currently studying Film Studies at Toronto Metropolitan University. Isha Misra recently graduated from a Regional Arts Program specializing in Drama, based in Mississauga. She stage managed a student-written one-act play, *With a Dash of Lead Poison* for the National Theatre School Festival. Isha Misra is interested in storytelling whether that be through film or theatre. She is passionate about telling stories about the connection between people and topics not openly talked about. Isha has been passionate about theatre and filmmaking since 2017, helping bring stories to life through writing, directing, acting, and stage management. Recently, Isha Misra was a Production Assistant on a film project based in Toronto for the 48-hour Film Challenge, *The Waypoint* (2022).

MARTIN AUSTIN

University of Toronto

Covid-19 and the Dancing Plague of Epistemic Injustice

Paper presentation

During the 2020 pandemic, the dance world underwent a transformative reckoning against abusive practices. By forcing dancers out of the studio, COVID-19 catalyzed an upheaval that empowered performers to address workplace misconduct, wage inequity, and unattainable body standards. Negotiating queer theory, dance history, and performance scholarship, this paper reveals that dance culture experienced a moment radical futurity when its oppressive structures were threatened by pandemic societal shifts. Using multiple instances of pandemic-era whistleblowing disclosures against large dance institutions, this study of dance proposes a potential silver-lining to a plague-time of universal death and destruction.

Martin Austin is a PhD student at University of Toronto's Centre for Drama, Theatre and Performance Studies. He received his BFA in Dance and English through Fordham University's partnership with Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, and has performed renowned repertory and site-specific work throughout his dance career. He is a research assistant for the SSHRC-funded anti-black racism study Category Is:, and is an administrative assistant in the Institute for Dance Studies. He is the frequent dance critic and features writer for Toronto's *Intermission Magazine*, covering events for Canadian Stage, Toronto Dance Theatre, and more. Martin employs academic methods to advocate for workers' rights in North American concert dance. He uses participatory-action, arts-based, and grounded theoretical dance research to archive stories of whistleblowing, resilience, and survival. He

aims to make the practice of dance in the West safer for future generations, positively impacting performing communities while creating new academic knowledge.

CLAUDIA BLOUIN

Université Laval

Becoming together with wool

Creative/ embodied presentation

The ecological thought speaks to us about the interconnectedness of all things: human, non-human, more-than-human (Abram, 1997). Together as people, animals, plants, rocks and so on, we evolve in the ever-changing mesh (Morton, 2010) or meshwork (Ingold, 2015) that is life. As artists, it seems that we play those treads and knots like a game of string figures to tell the stories of our path on this web of relationships as well as create new worlds. I propose to expose, in a combination of conventional paper presentation and live performance, the results of an exploration of the relationship between human body and wool on stage. This dialogue between body and matter is at the heart of my doctoral research-creation project. I seek to create imaginary universes of transformation on stage, through corporeality, Michel Bernard (2011)'s porous and heterogeneous conception of the body, and Deleuze and Guattari's notion of becoming (1980). To do so, I aim at increasing the presence of the matter I felt inspired, as a knitter, to work with : wool and yarn. Using the different languages of living arts at my disposal, I try to bring a new and fairer balance in my relationship with this matter and share with the audience the sensations and affects that I experience when entering in contact with it. My proposition is, therefore, to take you on part of my theoretical and practical journey to discover how to become with wool on stage, because, as Donna Haraway puts it, "we become-with each other or not at all" (2016). I wish to present a short performance created from the material that will emerge this fall as I explore how sound and video can enhance wool's presence, transmit sensation and engage transformation. The creative part of my presentation will be supported by my reflection on the aesthetic concepts mentioned above.

Claudia Blouin is a doctoral candidate in Littérature et arts de la scène et de l'écran, at Laval University (Québec, Canada). Artist and researcher, her interests lay in interartistic through the spectrum of the body. Her doctoral project is a research-creation on the body's becomings on stage in relationship with wool. This project is supported by the Fonds de recherche du Québec – Société et culture. Claudia pursues her reflection on those themes by contributing to academic journals such as *aparté* and *Écosystème* et by participating in



conferences in Quebec, Montreal, Toronto and Romania. In 2020, she founded La compagnie Doute around the project Ravel on the Beach, a multidisciplinary theater show which she co-wrote and co-directed and that was presented by JokerJoker in Quebec City, in 2021.

JENN BOULAY

Concordia University

Flipping the Script: Accessibility as Communication in the Theatre

Creative/embodyed and paper presentation

A research creation project that examines non-dominant modes of communication that serve as tools of access/accessibility for audience members in theatre and performance spaces. The non-dominant modes of communication that I will bring forward are audio-description, American Sign Language (ASL), Live Captioning, Textile Props, etc. My intentions of this project is to both challenge and examine the power relations and claimed authority that dominant/normative modes of communication have had over those that have been historically oppressed. Throughout my presentation, I plan to share an excerpt of my play-in-progress, which embeds accessibility into the script and production design; and will serve as an example of how it can be done. The overall goal of this research creation is to illustrate the infinite possibilities, while breaking down barriers that tend to exclude disabled bodies from the theatre. This presentation will be an invitation for artists and scholars to think about their practices, and how they do or do not engage with accessibility in their work. As accessibility has been historically ignored, I want to encourage people to bring it to the forefront of their work. It is meant to be hopeful and moving the theatre industry forward. While much effort was put into making online events accessible to audiences during the pandemic and shown to be effective, why not continue these practices while we return to in-person theatre. It is to be hopeful about the future of the theatre industry, which needs to be challenged and pushed forward, as theatre is meant to be a place to bring people together, not tear them a part. Ultimately, this presentation will be a reminder of why we create and go to the theatre together—to be with others from all walks of life who also love theatre.

Jenn Boulay is an emerging interdisciplinary performance artist/creator, playwright, performer, singer-songwriter, musician, theatre reviewer, sound artist and scholar. She holds an Honours Bachelor of Arts from the University of Toronto in Drama, Theatre and Performance Studies and Critical Studies in Equity and Solidarity. She is currently pursuing a graduate diploma in Communication Studies at Concordia University. Her current research

interrogates D/deaf and Disability Arts in Montréal, Québec and Atlantic Canada, to better understand the gaps between Eastern and Western Canada. Jenn's current research interests include, intersectional identity politics (visibility, and non-visibility), disability studies/theatre, theatre, theatrical clown and finding ways of how to make contemporary theatre more accessible to performers and audiences. You can find her creative and academic work published in *Feminist Space Camp Magazine*, *Knots: An Undergraduate Journal of Disability Studies (Knots)*, *Theatre Research in Canada (TRiC)*, *Canadian Theatre Review (CTR)*, and *UC Magazine*. She is an editor of the forthcoming issue of *Knots*.

DR. SEIKA BOYE, DR. JILL CARTER, DR. STEPHEN JOHNSON, DR. SARAH ROBBINS

University of Toronto

Gatherings Partnership

Roundtable

Gatherings: Archival and Oral Histories of Performance is a project initiated to serve the preservation and study of our performance histories. This Roundtable Discussion will focus on conducting archival and oral history research of performance with members of the research team. The project, which is directed by Principal Investigator Dr. Stephen Johnson (CDTPS Professor Emeritus), is interested in developing an infrastructure, archive, publication, and online presence that promotes the interests of documenting the history of performance in Canada. Broadly, the project is interested in "gatherings" as events, as places, and as practices. Co-Investigators and many Collaborators are graduates and current students of the CDTPS, including presenters Dr. Seika Boye, Dr. Jill Carter, and Dr. Sarah Robbins, among others. Currently, the project is in an exciting phase, preparing for both a publication of the culmination of the SSHRC Partnership Development phase, and an upcoming "Gatherings" conference with partner organizations Playwrights Canada Press, Theatre Museum Canada, and Dance Collection Danse. For further information on the project's research initiatives and participant bios, please consult the project website: <https://gatheringspartnership.com>.

Dr. Seika Boye is a dance scholar, artist and writer. She is Assistant Professor in the Centre for Drama, Theatre and Performance Studies at the University of Toronto, and the Founding Director of the Institute for Dance Studies. Her scholarship explores Blackness and dancing in Canada and confronts historical omissions of Canada's African-Canadian population.

Dr. Jill Carter (Anishinaabe-Ashkenazi) is Assistant Professor (Drama and Indigenous Studies) at the University of Toronto. Her scholarly research, creative projects, and activism are

community-driven, built upon ongoing relationships with Indigenous Elders, Artists and Activists, and an authority in the application of Indigenous aesthetic principles and traditional knowledge systems to contemporary performance.

Dr. Stephen Johnson is Professor Emeritus in the Centre for Drama, Theatre and Performance Studies (CDTPS), University of Toronto. He is the Project Director for the *Gatherings Partnership*, and has been involved in the scholarship of Canadian performance for forty years.

Dr. Sarah Robbins is a Postdoctoral Fellow at the University of Toronto, and currently the Project Manager for the *Gatherings Partnership*. She studies the relationship between gender and performance in theatrical institutional culture, and the pedagogy of actor training.

WILL BROCKMAN

University of Toronto

Ofra Haza, Zionism, & Me

Workshop

Ofra Haza, Zionism, & Me explores the music of Israeli singer Ofra Haza and her music's relationship to Jewish religious texts. Haza's unique blend of pop music with devotional lyrics created a new sound in the Israeli music scene. This talk will use Haza's music as a bridge to talk about the relationship between Israel and diaspora Jewry. Specifically, this talk will focus on the manner in which Zionism and issues concerning the State of Israel are used to demonise and harass diaspora Jews. As the University of Toronto continues to reckon with its own problems of antisemitism, *Ofra Haza, Zionism, & Me* seeks to explore the ways in which on-campus antisemitism affects us all. Why have Jewish voices historically been silenced? How can non-Jews be better allies to the Jewish community? Where do we fit in this messy situation? Music and its healing powers can be a bridge to a better future for us all. This future is hopefully one where we can live in peace.

Will Brockman is a queer Kanien'kehá:ka Jew, theatre artist, singer, educator, and scholar. Will holds a BFA from New York University's Tisch School of the Arts, where he studied at The Lee Strasberg Theatre & Film Institute. While at Strasberg, Will participated in the selective Practicum program, in which he originated the role of Blake in Katie Hathaway's Millennial Pink Falcon. During his time at NYU, Will also studied at the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art in London, England. Upon graduating, Will was honoured with the Outstanding Achievement in Studio Award at Tisch's 20th Annual Drama Awards. After graduating from

NYU, Will sang at The Town Hall in Scott Siegel's Broadway Rising Stars 2018, and various cabarets at Feinstein's 54 Below. Will's research interests include the history and development of acting techniques, Judaism and its relationship with the American Theatre, and First Nations drama & performance. Will is a proud member of Actors' Equity.

TRISTAN CASTRO-POZO

Three Trapped Puppets

Performance

"Three Trapped Puppets" is an antiwar puppetry performance, which reviews 1945's dropping of an atomic bomb on Japanese soil that can be seen as a fracture in human understanding about the right to kill and the morality of the war. This experimental puppetry performance is inspired by antiwar texts: Kan Kikuchi's *The Madman on the Roof* (1916), Danton Trumbo's *Johnny Got His Gun* (1939), Marguerite Duras's *Hiroshima Mon Amour* (1959). The rationale for a puppetry arts adaptation of these three post-war literary works intends to reflect the alienation of human interactions and the fractured relationship between puppet and puppeteer which establishes a parallel with the absurdity of the rules of war, where the dichotomous roles of controlled/controller and automaton/living creatures are obliterated by the rules of war. This experimental puppetry play discusses the fragility of human nature and the importance of free thinking. Finally, this puppetry performance aims to engage communities through puppetry techniques and to combine the post-war texts and the post-pandemic world.

Tristan Castro-Pozo is a performing artist with a genuine passion for collective creation and musical theatre. While doing graduate studies in Brazil, his artistic work was influenced by the Brazilian Augusto Boal. Such artistic influence has evolved, nowadays Tristan's puppetry plays are rooted for a sense of activism as well as for a historical revisionism. Tristan's current interest focuses on puppetry making and physical theatre. Tristan's plays have been staged in the World Theatre Day's festivals @ Casa Maíz and Culture Days @ Toronto Public Library.

CASSANDRE CHATONNIER

Université de Montréal

Pow-wow and Indigenous Perception of Space: Dance as a Tool to Rethink Public Spaces

Paper presentation

Public spaces in Montreal are increasingly inhabited by performances by First Nations members, often featuring dances from the pan-Indianist movement and pow-wows, these large annual gatherings of the various Indigenous Nations combining dances, songs and the wearing of traditional clothing. The body of the dancer or actor is at the center of creation in the performing arts, and theater and dance have the unique quality of bringing together actors and spectators in a common space to witness an event in a given time. I have chosen to prioritize performance because, on the one hand, I am a scenographer, and on the other hand, Indigenous performance participates in the creation of shared spaces. Shared space is defined here as a community space that is open to those who do not belong to the community, a space that is shared between different groups and individuals during an event. At the centre of these practices of shared space production are the dance and the pow-wow, whether they take place in territorial communities or in the city. One of the objectives of this project was to produce a collaborative methodology anchored in collective action. An approach to research that is in tune with Indigenous realities can allow for the implementation of a method of co-creating spatial knowledge connected to performance. Thus, after gaining a better understanding of what an Indigenous perception of space might be through pow-wows, I assembled a team to set up collaborative laboratories, referred to here as "collaboratories". These "collaboratories" led to meetings with the whole group and to sensory explorations of public spaces with the dancers. This process allowed us to grasp how performance, and more particularly dance, can become a tool for rethinking urban public space according to a perception of space that reflects the Indigenous worldviews.

Cassandre Chatonnier has a diploma from the École Boulle in France in Interior Design, Landscape Design and Exhibition Design. She graduated from Concordia University in Design for the Theatre in January 2011. Since her graduation, she has designed sets, props and costumes for plays in English and in French. She is also teaching at l'École de théâtre du Cégep de Saint-Hyacinthe. Having worked in interior design, Cassandre Chatonnier's work is largely influenced by architecture. She is also interested in the relationship between the actor and the space, and how it can feed her practice. She holds a master's degree in theatre from UQAM on this subject, which she obtained with honours. She has just finished her PhD in Urban Studies at INRS, where she is interested in the relationship between Indigenous performance and appropriation of space, and in the co-creation of a methodology for rethinking urban public spaces through dance.



STARR DOMINGUE

University of Guelph

“I’M THE GREATEST STARR (... but no one knows it)”: SOUNDS OF BLACKNESS IN CANADIAN MUSICAL THEATRE
Performance

This performance delves into the possibilities of cabaret as a mode of intervention within the genre of musical theatre in Canada, shedding some light on the challenges Black women still face, with aspirations of affecting change within the casting practices of my chosen vocation. Utilizing a phenomenological approach, small pieces of personal memoir from the life of a successful, working actor, who inhabits a body read as a woman that also, happens to be Black, I have crafted a musical style cabaret as a form of autoethnographic storytelling, interspersed with songs from the musical theatre canon. An autoethnographic approach allows me to reflect on the idea that opportunity within musical theatre dwindles the more specific the intersectionality of the artist being considered and hinges on often problematic, patriarchal, and colonial ideals. Using the musical theatre sphere as a microcosm of life in Canada offers a glimpse into the lives of those who share my specific intersectionality and the injustices we continue to experience at every level. There is a body of research that talks about Black women's experiences from first person accounts (Cooper; Lorde; Jones), and research that speaks to the representation of Black women in film (Gibson-Hudson; Courtney; McTaggart). My research extends these discussions and addresses these issues with a focus on musical theatre in Canada, through an arts-based research practice in the form of a musical style cabaret show. Essentially, using performance to intervene in a concept keeping me, and those in my intersectionality, from a fulfilling life in performance. By articulating my story and interrogating my memories of the past, I hope to instigate a transformation in Canadian musical theatre, for my future and the future of other Black women in Canada.

Starr Domingue is a multi-hyphenate artist, scholar and educator from Toronto, Ontario. A 20+ year veteran of stage and screen she has performed all over Canada, the United States and Europe, including years at Canada’s two major repertory companies, the Shaw Festival and the Stratford Festival, and a resident directorship for the European tour of the musical *Ain’t Misbehavin’*. She is also the creator/producer and host of the digital talk show, *The Blacktor’s Studio*: an online interview series highlighting the journey of actors of Colour who grace the Canadian stage. In 2022 she achieved her Masters in Theatre from the University of Guelph while also performing in stage productions of *Room* (Mirvish), *Dixon Road* (The



Musical Stage Company), *Red Velvet* (Crow's Theatre) and *Controlled Damage* (The Grand Theatre in London). Her research surrounds perceptions of Black women in performance with a focus on opportunity and representation within musical theatre.

ESTEBAN DONOSO, MARILÓ NUÑEZ, DENISE ROGERS VALENZUELA, MARIEL BELANGER, PHILIP GELLER, AISHA BENTHAM
York University

PLAYING DECOLONIAL FUTURE(S)/PAST(S): (UN)learning and (re)imaging performance praxis
 Creative/ embodied presentation

In May 2021, our collective hosted our first unconference on decolonizing practices at York University; wondering what we could possibly mean by decolonizing practices in theatre and performance. We discussed and enacted land-based practices, collective models of learning and teaching, drawing from Indigenous ways of knowing and being from Turtle Island and Latin America. We collectively engaged with issues like restorying a colonial understanding of the stage, anti-Aristotelian ways of playwriting, reimagining our relationships with nourishment, material objects and waste, the power of cultural performance, along with honest gathering and sharing in circular ways. In September 2022, we furthered our investigations and embarked in an immersive seven-day residency in which we participated in each other's practices and shared methodologies. This time around, we focused on two main issues: how to decolonize our approach to time and temporalities and how to document or register our work and experiences as to not be constrained by writing-centrism. As a way to process, expand and reflect upon our residency, we will co-write and create a script that will function both as a document of our encounters as well as an opportunity to enact our togetherness by co-occupying a space for writing -a writing pad-. We would like to treat the script as a palimpsest made from our different moments of togetherness, their different temporalities, and the different ways we each have managed to register that intensive residency week. Togetherness manifests through different layers: the togetherness of sharing our practices, the assembled materials we use as documents, us co-existing and re-appearing in the writing pad. Finally, there is the togetherness of the reading of the script. Our proposed presentation for FOOT consists of this palimpsestic reading, which we see as an instantiation of a circular temporality, a temporality that moves back only to go forward.

(de)collective We are a group of 6 international performance-scholars, practitioners, and cultural theorists – from a diversity of lived and ancestral experiences – examining the nuances of decolonizing individual/collective practice within performance. Gathering since late 2020, we



have hosted a decolonizing unconference with over 40 attendees of scholar-practitioners from across Turtle Island. Our research has furthered with a week-long in-person (un)learning to (re)member residency. Amongst us we have over 25 articles published and are active practitioners in a myriad of disciplines from food, movement, puppetry, land-based dramaturgy, play(writing), and (re)claiming craft(s) as material resistance.

Esteban Donoso, from Quito, Ecuador, holds an MFA in Dance from University of Illinois. He is a PhD candidate in Theatre and Performance Studies at York University.

Marilo Nuñez is playwright in residence at Carousel Players. She is a PhD candidate in Theatre & Performance Studies at York University.

Denise Rogers Valenzuela (she/her) is a Ph.D. candidate in Theater and Performance Studies at York University, from Santiago, Chile.

Mariel Belanger is 2022 CGA PHD SSHRC award winner and interdisciplinary performance artist in her second year as a Cultural Studies PhD student.

Philip Jonah Logan Geller (he/they) is a Métis (Red River) and Jewish (Ashkenazi) artist and educator, He holds an MFA, currently pursuing an MEd in Urban Indigenous Education from York University.

Aisha Lesley Bentham MA, BFA is an internationally trained artist, educator and vegan chef from Toronto who's research and passion look at the intersections of cookery and performance.

STEFAN DZEPAROSKI

A Story-Building in Motion

Creative/ embodied presentation

The creative/embodied presentation will investigate through the act of collective story-building the nature of “we” as a temporary collective assembled to create, disseminate and destroy one story. The notions of “we” live only as memories and fragments. Through the use of various dramaturgical techniques during the presentation a story will be built in which the audience is the main character, participant, and spectator. The gamification of the story-building experience directly correlates with the ideas of theatricality and the role of play in



the creative process. Tools that will be used range from memorization games to the use of Twitter and Instagram. Interested audience members will be asked to start following a Twitter account (StoryBuildingInMotion, tag: @building_motion) days before the presentation. There they will be given hints and information about the story-building. During the presentation, this Twitter account will be used as a springboard for Story-Building in Motion. The audience will be direct participants in this creative/embodied presentation. A Story-Building in Motion explores the ways and modes of being and living in the context of performance. Exploring the constructs of identities that transcend national and political borders this presentation wants to discover the ways how a story-building can lead towards togetherness if not oneness. In blending virtual and physical spaces, theatrical and institutional spaces this presentation will also explore personal and collective identities in the context of performance. The contradictions that will be discovered are necessary building blocks for our collective future. In building the story “we live together” we do tell the story.

Stefan Dzevaroski is a Serbian-born, Toronto-based international director and creator of visually arresting live productions. He is known for his interdisciplinary stage practices merging digital and live performance. Stefan’s work was seen Off-Broadway and on stages in Europe, Canada, and the US. Stefan is an award-winning director and educator who is expanding his creative practices into the realms of film and digital performance. His work is featured in the New York Times, New York Magazine, Globe and Mail, National Post, Toronto Star, and many online publications. What is essential to Stefan in his work is to place the artists’ identity through the creative use of multimedia theatre as a unique identity capable of connecting and unifying diverse communities.

PETER FARBRIDGE, JULIA PYE
Concordia University

Living the Rehearsal Together: Towards Inclusive and Ethical Practices at Post-Secondary Theatre Training Institutions
Paper presentation

In Canadian post-secondary theatre training institutions, “Indigenous, racialized, diversely gendered, disabled, Deaf, and linguistically minoritized theatre students remain poorly served by colonially-inflected curricula” (Smith-Roberts, Nolette et al 1). Revising theatre training practices of post-secondary education to include inclusive and ethical approaches is one way engender these “profound changes in the way we create and consume theatrical art

in the future” (Vandevender 99). This paper recounts a case study of ethical rehearsal practice during a studio production that took place Concordia University’s Theatre Department in the Fall of 2022. The course, entitled “Subject and Creation” explored the creative potential of a performer’s total cultural resources, i.e., their socio-cultural history, ethnocultural background, relationship to gender, physical disability or neurodiversity. Using Ōta Shōgo’s *Mizu no Eki* as a backdrop for devised experimentation, the group investigated how their personal stories, and in particular their relationships with their identities, could contribute to and influence their creative process. Numerous themes such as appropriation of dramatic material, institutional barriers, and other challenges emerged to form an “ethical tapestry” of rehearsal practice. This tapestry opened pathways towards an ethical relationality that “[acknowledges and honours] the significance of the relationships we have with others, how our histories and experiences position us in relation to each other, and how our futures as people in the world are tied together” (Donald 535). The group sought to collectively construct a non-rules-based ethical approach to rehearsal practice organized around a deep exploration of creative resources, along with nuanced pathways of relation beyond traditional identity categories. Their hope was that by “...giving attention to the subtlety of our shared relations, our trajectory can shift to co-existence with others, rather than mere acknowledgement of our associations and our changing contexts” (Bannon 218).

Peter Farbridge, MA. Peter is a theatre actor and creator working in Montreal. As founding member and co-artistic director of the Modern Times Stage Company from 1989 to 2022, Peter appeared in many of the productions, including the title roles of *Macbeth* and *Hamlet*. He earned several Toronto Dora Mavor Moore awards for his work with the company. Peter has co-translated and adapted the plays of several Iranian artists with Soheil Parsa, and he has served as co-writer or co-deviser on several new theatrical productions, including *Hallaj* (2009) and *Forgiveness* (2014). In 2017 Peter was nominated for a Meta Award for his performance in *Progress!* for Infinitheatre. He has completed an MA in Anthropology and Theatre and is currently Artist-in-Residence at Concordia University’s Department of Theatre. He currently collaborates with the project *Postmarginal: Inclusive Theatre Practice*, a project he initiated to seek to encourage the intersection of creative practices of marginalized and non-marginalized artists.

Julia Pye is a 22-year-old actor currently completing her bachelor’s degree in the Acting for the Theatre Specialization at Concordia University. She is a playwright and director as well as an actor. She is currently delving into explorations of her queer identity and Lebanese heritage within her work. The process of incorporating her identity into this art form has been extremely healing and she hopes to provide others with the same experience. With the use of absurdity

and unconventionality, she creates relatable works that incorporate themes of connections to the past as well as generational traumas. She has written and directed several plays including *The Thanksgiving Dinner* (2019) and *Book Club: The musical* (2020). She is an avid musical theatre lover and has been performing her whole life, including her most recent role as Emmaretta in *Hair* the musical (2023). Within the practice, providing a safe rehearsal space that combats colonial and hierarchical values has been a priority when creating and collaborating. Through a relational lens of the rehearsal space, (the people within the space, their histories etc.) an ethical practice is not only attainable but encouraged. Her participation in *The Water Station* (2022) has been a crucial aspect of creating through this lens. When not in school, she teaches theatre to ages 6-16. She hopes to encourage a sense of autonomy and mutual respect within the rehearsal space. She will continue to push the boundaries of her art further while emphasising what an ethical practice truly means.

KARA FLANAGAN

University of Victoria

Adapting Acting Education for Pandemic-Friendly Mediums

Paper presentation

What role does self-presentation theory play for students and teachers in adapting actor training education into pandemic friendly mediums: online, in-person indoor and in-person outdoor classrooms? Dewey (1916) argues that a person's success in education is related to their focus and willingness to learn. Moreover, Dewey (1938) highlights how the quality and continuity of experiences that educators provide their students can affect students' motivation to learn. When an educator drastically changes the physical learning environment, there is a potential for a psychological change in a student's focus and will. Psychological changes can naturally manifest in one's presentation of energy, behaviour, and appearance. With traditional classroom settings being converted into online and significantly different in-person training environments, the potential for a parallel transformation by actors and teachers in adjusting to these new environments can be expected. In self-presentation theory, an individual can control the self-image presented to others (Leary, 1983). But what if the new self-image is: survivor? Online classrooms have unique challenges in adapting traditional actor training methods, and educators should be alert to the impacts on students' commitment by observing their changes in energy, behaviour, and costuming because self-presentation impacts not only the characters being portrayed, but more importantly, the actors. Our success as educators is largely determined by how well our students learn and what kind of actors they become. Self-presentation theory can be used as

a lens through which to observe students' focus, and it can be applied to reimagine the roles of the students and teachers. This chapter is written as a play, enabling you, our readers to take on a role.

Kara Flanagan is a Ph.D. candidate in the Education Studies program, Department of Curriculum and Instruction, Faculty of Education at the University of Victoria. Flanagan's research focus is on drama and music education. Flanagan is the co-founder of an acting school, the Victoria Academy of Dramatic Arts (www.vadarts.com), and a theatre company, Theatre Carpe Diem. In her capacity as a curriculum developer and teacher, she is focused on developing curriculum for students at the post-secondary level to support them in school and in their professional work.

DR. KATHLEEN GALLAGHER, CHRISTINE BALT, NANCY CARDWELL, MUNIA DEBLEENA TRIPATHI, ASHLEIGH A. ALLEN, CELESTE KIRSH

University of Toronto

Audacious Citizenship in Times of Crisis: Imagining Global Socio-Ecological Justice

Curated panel

This curated presentation draws from the collaborative, multi-sited ethnographic study, Global Youth (Digital) Citizen-Artists and their Publics: Performing for Socio-Ecological Justice (2019-2024), led by Dr. Kathleen Gallagher. The five-year research project, unfolding in drama classrooms and workshops in Toronto, Canada; Lucknow, India; Kaohsiung, Taiwan; Thessaloniki, Greece; Coventry, England; and Bogotá, Colombia, harnesses theatre as a methodology for understanding, imagining and facilitating climate justice across the globe. Acknowledging and foregrounding the inseparability of climate justice and socio-economic equity, challenging the global shifts towards depoliticising narratives of ecological justice have been core values of this project (see Neimanis et al., 2015; Shiva, 2010; Shiva, 2020). Over the duration of our work to date, we have looked at the intersections between the 'social' and the 'ecological' as understood and communicated by youth participants across sites, expressed in their creative work, in interviews, and as respondents to our quantitative survey. As participants from multiple sites began to interact with each other in our newly imagined online 'Global Drama Club' of 2021, sensory- and spatial memory- driven sessions that we curated in the third year of the project invited us to witness how engagements across cultures can deepen our understanding of the different constellations in which the 'individual,' the 'social,' and the 'ecological' are imagined and experienced. In this presentation, we will share a few examples of the first three years of our work to illustrate

some of our key findings around this theme. Concurrently, we will trace the important shifts in our metho-pedagogical approach (see Gallagher & Wessels, 2011) in response to the global pandemic, our commitments to privileging mutual care-taking across sites, and our turn to sensory creative practices that have facilitated the inferences we share. Gallagher, K., and A. Wessels. 2011. "Emergent Pedagogy and Affect in Collaborative Research: A Metho-Pedagogical Paradigm." *Pedagogy, Culture and Society* 19 (2): 239–258. Neimanis, A., C. Åsberg, and J. Hedrén. 2015. "Four Problems, Four Directions for Environmental Humanities: Toward Critical Posthumanities for the Anthropocene." *Ethics & the Environment* 20 (1): 67–91. Shiva, V. 2020. *Reclaiming the commons: Biodiversity, indigenous knowledge, and the rights of mother earth*. Synergistic Press. Shiva, Vandana. 2010. *Staying Alive: Women, Ecology and Survival in India*. India: Women Unlimited.

Dr. Kathleen Gallagher is a Fellow of the Royal Society of Canada, a Distinguished Professor and the Director of the Centre for Drama, Theatre and Performance Studies at the University of Toronto. Dr. Gallagher studies theatre as a powerful medium for expression by young people of their experiences and understandings. She has published numerous books and articles on the intersection of youth, theatre, and the social world. Her most recent co-edited collection, *Global Youth Citizenry and Radical Hope: Enacting Community-Engaged Research through Performative Methodologies* (2020) and her monograph, *Hope in a Collapsing World: Youth, Theatre and Listening as a Political Alternative* (2022) are based on her recently completed collaborative ethnography.

Christine Balt is a postdoctoral research fellow at the Centre for Drama, Theatre and Performance Studies, University of Toronto. Her research interests include interdisciplinary applications of applied theatre, performance, audience research and drama education in studies of ecologies, place and urban environments. Her current research engages with site-specific and place-based performance as tools for examining how young people find and make 'place' in sites of rapid urban development.

Nancy Cardwell is a doctoral candidate at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, University of Toronto. Her research focuses on arts in education through the lens of critical literacy studies and feminist theory in elementary and secondary school settings. She has been both a course and studio director at York University, a guest lecturer presenting on culture, politics and dance, and has created arts-based workshops for educational outreach programs at the National Ballet of Canada, the Stratford Festival, as well as across school boards in Ontario. Both a Dora Mavor Moore and a Gemini award winning dancer and choreographer, Nancy is an established artist on the Canadian dance scene.

Munia Debleena Tripathi is a PhD candidate at the Centre for Drama, Theatre and Performance Studies, University of Toronto. Her research interests include contemporary Bangla theatre, applied theatre and audience research. She works as a playwright, theatre director, trainer and workshop-facilitator, and lives between Toronto and Kolkata. She is passionate about stories and loves making beautiful things together.

Ashleigh A. Allen is a cis-gender white settler who has lived most of her life as an uninvited guest on traditional, ancestral, unceded land of the Haudenosaunee, Huron-Wendat, Anishinaabe and Mississaugas of the Credit River peoples in Tkaronto. She is a writer, poet, teacher, researcher, and fifth-year doctoral candidate in Curriculum and Pedagogy at OISE, University of Toronto.

Celeste Kirsh is a lover of words, a mother to boys, the host of the podcast Teaching Tomorrow, a middle school teacher, and a PhD student in the Curriculum and Pedagogy program at OISE/University of Toronto. She believes performance can be a powerful catalyst for learning and wrote her Major Research Project at OISE on using spoken word poetry in the classroom. Her research interests centre around social and sociopolitical discourses of writing and how writing in the classroom can propel civic engagement. When she is not in school, she can likely be found running (very slowly) somewhere in the woods.

TARA GOLDSTEIN AND JENNY SALISBURY

University of Toronto

60 Years of Queer and Trans Moments of Activism and Care: An Archival Research Verbatim Theatre Project

Creative/ embodied presentation

This creative/embodied presentation will describe a University of Toronto Research Opportunities Program (ROP) project for second and third-year undergraduate students called 60 Years of Queer and Trans Moments of Activism and Care. Members of the undergraduate research team identify as Queer, Trans, Black, Indigenous and People of Colour (QTBIPOC) and as QTBIPOC allies. The primary goals of the project are to (1) conduct archival research on QTBIPOC moments of activism and care between 1970 and the present and (2) share these moments through a set of verbatim theatre monologues. Our presentation will provide a brief overview of the project and feature the performance of several undergraduate verbatim monologues about historical moments of QTBIPOC activism

and care. The research team is working with work an intersectional lens, a lens that examines the intersections of activism around heteronormativity and cis-normativity with other forms of structural discrimination such as anti-Asian racism, anti-Black racism, anti-Indigenous racism and settler colonialism. For many years LGBTQ and queer of colour researchers have been writing about the overrepresentation of White and middle-class perspectives in LGBTQ research and have called for more research with and about folks who identify as QTBIPOC (see for example, Goldstein 2021a, Goldstein 2021b, Moore & Brainer 2013, Owis 2022, Owis & Goldstein 2022). Uncovering unknown and hidden histories of QTBIPOC activism and care is needed to both (1) challenge the overrepresentation of White middle-class perspectives in LGBTQ research, and (2) better understand ongoing oppression. The significance of this project comes with the intentional focus of uncovering QTBIPOC moments of care and activism within and outside the LGBTQ liberation movement and the intentional recruitment and training of QTBIPOC undergraduate students through the University of Toronto ROP program.

Tara Goldstein is a professor, researcher and playwright in the Department of Curriculum, Teaching and Learning at the Ontario Institute of Studies in Education, University of Toronto, and the Vice Principal of New College. Tara is also the Founder and current Co-Artistic Director of Gailey Road Productions where theatre meets research and research meets theatre. Tara's most recent play *The Love Booth and Other Plays* will be performed at the 2023 Toronto Pride Festival.

Jenny Salisbury is a postdoctoral research fellow at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education. Jenny is also, a theatre director, an arts-based researcher who specializes in new play development, and the Co-Artistic Director of Gailey Road Productions. For over 20 years, Jenny has worked with playwrights, actors, and theatre ensembles to create new plays with a rich emotional tapestry, and a strong justice ethic, rooted in physical theatre traditions.

CAITLIN GOWANS

University of Toronto

Re-wilding the digital: posthumanist defiance of the extractivist capitalocene in Jennifer Healey's *The Nether*

Paper presentation

One scene repeats in Jennifer Haley's *The Nether*. One character tells another, to the interlocutor's delight, that the speaker has planted a real tree. In the first instance, the speaker is Papa, the owner of a Victorian manor; he is speaking to ten-year-old Iris. In the second instance, the speaker is Sims, an imprisoned husband and father; he is speaking to 60-year-old renowned physicist, Doyle. The characters are the same in both scenes. The first scene takes place in the "nether"; an augmented reality version of the internet while the second takes place "in world". The sapling exists in world, a small tribute to the lush trees and gardens that exist virtually in the nether. "What happens when organisms plus environments can hardly be remembered for the same reasons that even Western-indebted people can no longer figure themselves as individuals and societies of individuals in human-only histories" asks Donna Haraway in her *Staying with the Trouble*. Haraway approaches this question with "generative joy, terror, and collective thinking" (31). This paper follows Haraway by attending to the wilds as a site of community not just between humans but between human and non human animals; and animals and non animal allies. While Haley's play is about a digital world and, on the surface, asks questions about the relative ontology of augmented virtual reality, it remains rooted in the ecological wilds of our world. Premiering in 2013, the play anticipates the pandemic move to online as well as Meta's "metaverse" but asks us what will have to be physically extracted from our world in order to paradoxically escape an already extracted world. This paper argues for a dramaturgical model that attends to the physical wilds while interrogating the virtual, the digital, and the augmented real.

Caitlin Gowans is a PhD Candidate at the University of Toronto's Centre for Drama, Theatre and Performance Studies. Her research focuses on posthuman defiance in dramaturgies at the Royal Court Theatre in London, UK.

TAYLOR MARIE GRAHAM

University of Guelph and Western University

Canadian in Caithness

Paper presentation

July 2022, Canadian playwright Taylor Marie Graham traveled to Caithness, Scotland, and worked as the Lyth Arts Centre's (LAC) summer playwright-in-residence, supported by the Canada Council for the Arts. Throughout the residency, Taylor conducted an intercultural exchange with Caithness residents. Taylor worked with local women to establish a regional playwrights circle; supported on-going community arts projects at LAC invested in

environmental activism; attended various local cultural events; met with and learned from artists and scientists working in the region; conducted environmental and cultural research for a new play-in-process; and audited field work by researchers at The Environmental Research Institute, The North Highland College, University of the Highlands and Islands.

Taylor Marie Graham (she/her) is an award-winning theatre artist, writer, and educator living in Cambridge, Ontario / Haldimand Tract. She has an MFA in Creative Writing and is a PhD Candidate in the School of English and Theatre Studies, University of Guelph. Currently, Taylor teaches at Western University and is writing a new play supported by the Waterloo Region, Ontario Arts Council, Canada Council, and Lyth Arts Centre in Scotland. Both her creative and scholarly work explores rural feminist identities and the decolonization of bodies in space. www.taylormariegraham.com

ALISHA GRECH

University of Toronto

The Lives That Should Have Been: A Performance of Persistence, Survival and Life Beyond Asynchronous screening and audio exploration

In 1996, legal scholar and civil rights activist Kimberlé Crenshaw co-founded the African American Policy Forum (also known as AAPF), leading to the expansion of discourse surrounding critical race theory, intersectional feminism, voting and gender-based violence. In 2014, AAPF launched the *****#SayHerName* campaign to bring awareness to the stories of Black women and girls who have been killed by police violence. Since its founding, the AAPF has tracked and catalogued 197 cases involving Black women and girls, who have died at the hands of racist police interactions. The AAPF reported that the homicide rate “among Black girls and women ages 10-24 was higher than for any other group of females.” In 2019, the African American Policy Forum, in collaboration with the Hammer Museum created and performed *Say Her Name: The Lives That Should Have Been* - a work of documentary theatre constructed from interviews between AAPF and the mothers of Black women and girls murdered by police. On the creation of this performance, collaborators Crenshaw, Sharpe-Levine and Asim write that *The Lives That Should Have Been*: “bears the imprint of asymptotic recovery, a process of real-life data collection necessary to attempt spanning the chasm between the reality of Black women’s experiences... The Lives That Should Have Been is an intersectional counter-history written to pave largely untrodden narrative terrain.” For FOOT 2023, I propose an asynchronous screening of *The Lives That Should Have Been*, followed by an asynchronous audio exploration (otherwise understood



as a podcast episode or soundscape), that incorporates discussions (specific interviewee details are forthcoming) at the intersection of gender based violence, data collection and activism.

Alisha Grech is a multidisciplinary digital artist and scholar based out of Tkaronto, Canada. Currently, Alisha is a doctoral student at the University of Toronto, researching the connections between white, mainstream feminism(s) and gender-based violence (GBV) in North America. As of September 2022, Alisha has also joined the Critical Digital Humanities Initiative as a Graduate Fellow, where she is constructing a digital database and resource hub to house contemporary findings and community resources on GBV in Canada.

NIKKI HUANG, HOI TONG KEUNG, THOMAS LI, BEVIS NG

University of Toronto

Be Water: An Exploration on Our Relationship with Home Through an Interdisciplinary Performance

Performance

“Be Water, My Friend. Be formless, shapeless, like water.” —Bruce Lee We, as artists in Toronto, are inspired by water’s fluidity to blend forms of expression and express through a multicultural lens. In this two-part performance, four interdisciplinary artists who identify primarily as percussionists explore the idea of “home.” As international students, we constantly reflect on our relationship with our homeland. We tell our personal stories through music, speech, videos, and drama. Created and performed by Thomas Li, the first part—“Calving”—is a five-minute original composition for percussion, speech and visual media. It is based on a poem with the same title, written by Hong Kong-based poet Michelle Yim. Inspired by the recent wave of diaspora in Hong Kong, the Cantonese poem uses calving ice as a metaphor for people in diaspora. The visual media transforms the space into a dreamscape shaped by a displaced person’s memory, as the performer represents the displaced individual in voicing a struggle of going voiceless in a foreign land. In a piece presented in a foreign language, the cross-media expression becomes the universal language that bridges the performer to the audience, exploring the omnipresent feeling of bewilderment. Performed by all collaborators, the second part—“Dual/Duel”—is an eight-minute interdisciplinary performance incorporating music, drama, and video projections. We portray the inner struggle between focusing on the present and feeling homesick as international students. Building upon two percussion pieces, Patrick Hart’s “LA at night” and Tona Scherchen-Hsiao’s Chinese folk-inspired “Chant de nostalgie au croissant de lune,” we

explore multiple forms of duality, including music and drama and pre-recorded and live video projections. We represent the image of home through short films of Victoria Harbor and musical compositions, and depict the present through improvisational theater, sound, and video projections.

Taiwanese percussionist **Nikki Huang** is currently completing a Master's degree in Percussion Performance at the University of Toronto. She is a research assistant in Technology and Performance Integration Research Lab. Her teachers include Prof. Aiyun Huang, Prof. Charles Settle and Prof. Beverley Johnston. As a percussionist, she is passionate about exploring the realm of story-telling and attempts to portray different characters through her performance. Nikki is also thrilled to collaborate with different art forms. She has been involved in diverse performance settings, including original music, children musical theater, and interdisciplinary workshops. Besides percussion music, Nikki's musical influences include jazz singing. As a self-taught jazz vocalist, she has learned improvisation techniques and how to interact with other musicians through jamming sessions and performances.

Hong Kong-raised percussionist **Hoi Tong Keung** believes in the power of music in connecting people from around the world. As a contemporary music advocate, she attended soundSCAPE festival (online) and Sō Percussion Summer Institute (U.S.A.) where she worked with composers and premiered their works. As a dedicated chamber musician, Hoi Tong has performed in Canada, the U.S.A., and Hong Kong. KÖNG Duo, her duo with fellow percussionist Bevis Ng, held a residency at Banff Centre in summer 2022, where they curated their début performance—"good morning, hong kong." Hoi Tong's primary performance and research interests lie in works for speaking percussionist. She recently presented a lecture-recital on a text-music analysis of Rzewski's *The Fall of the Empire*. Hoi Tong is a second-year D.M.A. student at the University of Toronto and holds degrees from Boston Conservatory at Berklee and the Chinese University of Hong Kong.

Originally from Hong Kong, **Bevis Ng** is currently completing a Master's degree in Percussion Performance at the University of Toronto with full support from Ontario Graduate Scholarship. His teachers include Prof. Aiyun Huang, and Prof. Beverley Johnston. He is a teaching assistant for the university's percussion ensemble and also a research assistant in the TaPIR lab. He performed actively around the globe as a chamber and solo percussionist. He co-founded KÖNG duo, a Toronto based percussion duo from Hong Kong. The duo performed their recent curation, "good morning, hong kong", at the Banff Centre of Arts and Creativity for the Evolution: Classical program in 2022. He believes in the power of collaboration. Recently, he premiered a collaborative solo piece by Fish Yu, "Cave" for tam-



tam, processing electronics, and immersive audio—in The Space Between Conference at McMaster University, Hamilton.

Percussionist **Thomas Li** is active as an orchestral musician and performer of new music. Currently in his first year of Master's at the University of Toronto, Thomas studies under the tutelage of Aiyun Huang. As an avid contemporary performer, Thomas is a member of UToronto's Contemporary Music Ensemble. He is interested in integrating visual media with his playing, and aspires to dedicate his artistic voice to expressing personal emotions and preserving the collective narratives of his home city, Hong Kong. Under the guidance of Beverley Johnston, he is currently carrying out a study on how cinematic language can help communicate contemporary musical gestures when the two art forms are paired together.

SHAKIBA FADAE JONAGHANI

University of Toronto

The Rooted Freedom (A story-sharing circle)

Story-sharing circle/ creative presentation

I am this person, standing right here right now. I am carrying pains and joys waiting to be seen, heard, performed, and held. As an Iranian immigrant, this story-sharing circle is inspired by my stories in the recent five months, during which people in my country have been experiencing a historical time. I am witnessing that they have countless stories of being oppressed, violented, and still hopeful for creating social and political changes. I will invite some of these voices to be with us virtually. I am aware that not anybody has the stage to share their stories, and I am grateful for the 90-minute circle we are going to form. We will be up to 16 people physically present and at least three people online from Iran and around the world, where beyond the borders, "we live together." Sharing stories in any form would be voluntary all the time, and sometimes some of us would participate as witnesses. I will also share a 10-minute performance (named The Rooted Freedom) as a part of my current story after listening to the other stories. Attending this short outdoor performance would be optional, and participants who prefer to stay in the building can watch the live performance as a broadcast. This performance is ongoing in my daily life in Toronto, based on some indigenous Bakhtiari's rituals (my nomad community in Iran), with some eco-social activism intentions. The core idea of performing The Rooted Freedom (a story-sharing circle) is based on the indigenous concept of love or Mehr (a Persian word generally means peace and the sun).

Shakiba Fadaee Jonaghani is an MA student at the Center for Drama, Theatre, and Performance Studies. She holds a BA in Theatre Acting and Directing and an MA in Art Research from the University of Tehran. Shakiba has 13 years of theoretical and practical experience in applied theatre, drama therapy, teaching, and performing. Her current research interest is the indigenous ways of eco-social activism through performances with/about nature based on Mehr/Love as their paradigm.

MEERA KANAGESWARAN

University of Toronto

Whose Stories are We Telling?

Paper presentation with performance

Bharathanatyam as a dance form does not come from an unbroken tradition. My paper presentation and performance, which will include a few excerpts from my dance films *Ilappu* and *Isolation*, will address reimagining Bharathanatyam as a storytelling artform to tell present-day diasporic stories. *Ilappu* portrays the experiences of people during the civil war in Sri Lanka and *Isolation* deals with personal experiences of four dancers during the COVID-19 pandemic. With a brief introduction into the difficult history of Bharathanatyam I will address the exclusive nature of this dance form as it is practiced today. While questioning whose stories are depicted within the current Bharathanatyam repertoire, I contemplate areas within the dance form which need change. My presentation will conclude with a performance in which I employ the versatility of the artform to tell a story based on lived experiences.

Meera Kanageswaran is a passionate dancer, dedicated teacher, and an avid storyteller. She is currently pursuing a PhD at the University of Toronto's Centre for Drama, Theatre and Performance Studies. She holds an MA (Master of Arts) from the Centre for Drama, Theatre and Performance Studies at the University of Toronto and an MFA (Master of Fine Arts) in Dance from York University. Meera's doctoral research trajectory includes critically studying current Bharathanatyam pedagogy in order to create inclusive and accessible Bharathanatyam classrooms. In her performance career, Meera has danced in Germany, Switzerland, India, South Africa, the US and Canada. Meera is the principal teacher at Mississauga-based dance school, Confidance Bharatham, which she founded in 2006. Her recent choreographic works include *Destructive Desires*, *Let's talk about it*, *Balancing on the Hyphen*, *Ilappu*, *Isolation* and *Engal Kathaikal*.

SOYKAN KARAYOL

University of Toronto

Isolated Togetherness: Advantages and Downsides of Building A Movement Across Oceans And Digital Landscapes

Paper presentation

An academic paper analyzing the benefits, faults, privileges, and consequences of the increased use of technology, digital performance, and social media when educating, entertaining, and organizing in the past decade from a Turkish-Canadian perspective. As a 90s born Turkish-Canadian artist and scholar who grew up in the boom of the internet and digital technology, the author sets out to research how the increased use of technology in our theatre performances, as well as in our lives beyond, has impacted people in the last decade. Through autoethnographic methods, this paper aims to analyze both the advantages and the downsides of using the internet and digital technology to educate, entertain, and organize. By referring to existing scholarship and adopting a dialectical materialist perspective, the critically examined increased use of technology is observed as both a freeing and limiting development. By conducting case studies of Gezi Park protests and the COVID-19 pandemic, the paper further investigates the effects of social media and digital performances in building movements and communities. The results reveal that digital technology can extend knowledge but also take away power. The paper concludes with emphasizing the importance of collective action.

Soykan Karayol is a PhD student at the Centre for the Drama, Theatre and Performance Studies. He holds a B.A. Hons. and a diploma in Professional Actor Training from the Theatre and Drama Studies program jointly offered between the University of Toronto Mississauga and Sheridan College. Born and raised in Türkiye, his theatre training and practice spans across the two countries and since graduating, Soykan has been working as an actor, playwright, and translator based in Toronto. Soykan is passionate about anti-fascist, anti-imperialist, and socialist stories and performances. He is particularly interested in theatre that critiques local and global oppression, caused by the exploitative profit-based systems humanity has been forced to live in. Soykan believes theatre can spread hope, promote intercultural dialogue, and inspire collective action. His current research examines Turkish political theatre history, giving special attention to leftist performances of the turbulent 1960-1980 period.

ABBY LACELLE

University of Toronto

[All Wailing]: Safety and Collective Grieving in Ari Aster's *Midsommar*

Paper presentation

In Ari Aster's unconventional horror film, *Midsommar*, the protagonist, Dani, suffers the deaths of her parents and sister by murder-suicide before travelling with her emotionally-disconnected boyfriend and his friends to the close-knit Swedish commune, Hårga, for the midsummer festival. Though initially Dani is isolated with and by her grief—crying, wailing, and panicking alone, despite her attempts to find community and support—the Hårga (however horrific and foreign their traditions may appear to the Americans) allow and encourage her to engage in cathartic acts of interpersonal, embodied, public mourning; indeed, though elsewhere she is ostracized, the commune celebrates, rewards, and reciprocates Dani's outcries of emotion. And while the Hårga may be seen as brutal antagonists who lure and then ritualistically sacrifice Westerners, in contrast to the alienating comportment of Dani's unsympathetic peers, and through displays of breathing, chanting, wailing, grieving, moaning, and dancing in unison, they form an interdependent network of care and an outlet for her grief. *Midsommar* foregrounds the violences of both excessive and insufficient affective resonance, ultimately positing that only those who can connect with and contribute to the emotional, intellectual, and physical wellbeing of the collective are secure, thereby taking on a visceral literalization of Stephen Porges and Gabor Maté's stipulations that, more than the absence of threat, safety is the presence of connection. Living necessitates togetherness. In this paper I marshal the work of affect and queer theorists Lauren Berlant, Ann Cvetkovich, Judith Butler, and Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, as well as proponents of trauma studies like Porges and Maté, in order to investigate embodied affective coregulations of grief, dialectics of death, violence, recovery, and mourning, and the intricate coexistence of danger and safety.

Abby Lacelle holds an English Honours BA of first-class standing from Brock University, and has just completed their SSHRC-funded MA at the University of Toronto. They will pursue their PhD in English at McGill University in the fall of 2023. Their research investigates the interplay of affect and feminist theories and disability studies in contemporary non-fiction literature and centres the generative potential of displays of rage in autopathographies. More recently, their work has focalized reproductive justice and theories of ethical mourning during pregnancy loss. Abby is excited to participate this year, for the second time, in the annual FOOT conference.

ALEX LAZARIDIS

University of the Fraser Valley, Capilano University

Theatre as an Act of Whole-Self Listening

Paper presentation

Projecting a role onto the audience during certain performances is a well known technique in theatre. A script or directorial choice might assign the audience the role of political mob or spiritual congregation. During a soliloquy, an actor might impose an identity on the audience in order to imply a specific relationship. Some postmodernist and post-structuralist schools of thought — and also some essentialist schools of thought — consider this problematic. Awareness of the power dynamics of “racial,” ethnic, or class difference, cautions us that perceptions of outward markers of identity do not grant access to the inward lived experiences of one another. Others suggest that, despite difference, it’s possible for individuals to ‘co-inhabit’ one another by spending time in intimate, ‘whole-self’ listening. Such listening can result in empathy, compassion, and even love. I will entertain the possibility of such mutual knowing. Drawing on the work of Kym McLaren, Hannah DeJaegher and others, I will suggest this kind of knowing is possible and can be scaled up to a theatre-level event in which groups of individuals can achieve whole-self listening that is mutually reinforced by the collective. I’ll try to show that, as McLaren argues, an oscillation between role assigning and role surrendering can achieve connection and transformation, and that a concomitant flow between collective knowing and the individualized knowing of the “emancipated spectator” (Ranciere) is possible and can be mutually reinforcing. I will describe some of the ways a theatrical performance can create conditions for whole-self, communal listening, by referencing work that has inspired me, as well as work I have made with Fight With a Stick Performance.

Alex Lazaridis is Artistic Director of the acclaimed performance group, Fight With a Stick, and has received a number of theatre awards for acting, directing, and innovation. He teaches performance theory and practice at Capilano U, and theatre history and acting at UFV. His doctorate (UBC) was in scenography and embodied cognition — Scenographic Encounters: using cognitive theories to explore audience embodiment of performance space (2017). His MA thesis developed a theory of documentary theatre and documented the site-specific testimonial play he created in collaboration with the Philippine Women Center of BC and the department of Geography at UBC — Productive Tensions: A theory of documentary Theatre (2009). He has published a number of articles in academic journals on



documentary/testimonial theatre, theatre criticism and dramaturgy. His current focus as an artist and scholar is on our entanglement with the other-than-human world around us.

DEREK MANDERSON

York University

Learn/Roll/Play: Scaffolding Collaborative Play with Tabletop Role-Playing Games

Paper presentation

During the 2022 *Hybrid by Design* festival, Aislinn Rose delivered an impassioned speech championing our return to live theatre while waxing poetic about the magic of sharing a space, all to the crowd's thunderous applause. The buzz of energy in the room was undeniable, which excited me to no end after years of online performances. However, as this call to togetherness faded with the stage lights, I felt an intense desire to harness that moment rather than allow it to slip away. Could there be a more actionable way to rediscover our community roots beyond passive presence? How can we relearn what it means to be together in a room full of strangers? Perhaps, what we need is a theatrical playdate. Such was the impetus for this research-creation project, which asked audience members to bravely join me as participants in a gamified performance playground. Using mechanics from tabletop role-playing games (TTRPGs), I designed an accessible game/production called *Learn/Roll/Play* to guide audience members/players in improvising a collective story. The production underwent several iterations over the course of a summer, where player feedback was solicited to inform the development of a system that prioritized audience comfort, care and enjoyment. In this presentation, I will highlight some of the specific strategies I used for scaffolding generative play, augmented with some anecdotal evidence of the joy and hilarity that ensues when a group of novice players are encouraged to let their imagination run wild.

Derek Manderson is a PhD student in Theatre and Performance Studies at York University. His research focuses on participatory theatre, using a game-design framework to analyze the rules governing collaborative play. Understanding the risk and vulnerability audiences may face when asked to assume agency in a performance setting, Derek is particularly interested in approaching his studies with a lens of care. Passionate about education, he currently holds a teaching assistant position in the AMPD faculty.

WEBSTER MCDONALD

University of Kansas

Spectacles of Punishment/Bodies Inciting Justice/An Encounter with Blackness: Counter-Publicity, Self-Making, Performance as/of History and Decentralized Theatre Making Ethics
Paper presentation

"Spectacles of Punishment, Bodies inciting Justice and An Encounter with Blackness" (all creative works) provides an examination of the activist potential of devised theatre methods and the ability of performance to create a rich encounter with history in a way very different from archival or scholarly investigation. Through these pieces I discuss the difference between devising and scripted work, between collective, shared dramaturgical input and a singular one, and between a director as authority versus as a collaborator. Evolving from these creative activities is a method that I am calling decentralized theatre-making which should be understood as a praxis of creating theatre that is experiential, messy, reciprocal, and embodied. This method evokes similar resonances with four important scholars whose works enact a sort of epistemic disobedience. Firstly, Sylvia Wynter's indefatigable critique of the over-representation of the "human" which serves to reveal the ways in which the coloniality of power renders people of color (in this paper, black queer subjects) as the dysselected other. Secondly E. Patrick Johnson's "quaring" Queer Studies that deconstructs the ways in which homosexuality was disavowed as a proper object of analysis in black studies. Thirdly, Jose Esteban Munoz's rejection of queer pragmatism and queer alienation by breaching normative public practices in and through performances that enact counter-publicity and therefore contests "the hegemonic supremacy of the majoritarian public sphere" (Munoz, 1). Finally, Tami Spry's work that situates auto-ethnography within processes that unsettles power in and through utopian performatives. For Spry, auto-ethnography centers the researcher's body who will engage is a sort of "strange dialogue" where the self interacts with other bodies and their specific relationship with the past. A decentralized theatre-making methodology anchored in these epistemic disobediences allow me a colonial subject and the collaborators to revive historical archive to ask: What does performance contribute to the archive? In other words, what is being created through devised performance as a response to history? At an even more significant level, how might performing historical documents allow performers, collaborators, and audiences to rethink the depiction of history through the lens of marginal experiences?

Webster McDonald is an artist-scholar and educator. He received a B.F.A. in Theatre Arts from The Edna Manley College of the Visual and Performing Arts and a M.A. in Theatre

Education: Theatre and Community from Emerson College. Webster has presented critical papers in Black Masculinities in African Diaspora Theatre at the University of Bahamas, Feminist deconstruction of hegemonic beliefs about gender and sexuality unfolding in the Caribbean at the University of Toronto, Queer Hermeneutics from the Jamaican stage at Arts Emerson, and Black performativity and gender roles in Jamaican Popular Culture at the Simon Fraser University in Vancouver. Webster is a co-author of the anthology *Dubbin Monodrama Anthology I: Black Masculinities in African Diaspora Theatre* (Edited by d’bi. young anitafrika and Christopher Oliver, published by Spolrusie Publishing, 2019). He is currently a 3rd-year Ph.D. student at the University of Kansas in the Department of Theatre & Dance where he critiques and problematizes the ways in which aspects of Jamaican popular cultural expressions such as Dancehall music serve to engender hegemonic constructions of masculinity and femininity.

JAYNA MEES

York University

Welcome to Respite: Spectatorship, Embodiment, and Immersion in Virtual Reality

Paper presentation

With the emergence of virtual reality (VR), the concept of ‘theatricality,’ and the potential for immersive storytelling within theatrical frameworks is being challenged, questioned, and explored anew. Unlike its cousin, augmented reality, VR makes use of a head mounted device to immerse participants in a 3-dimensional, 360-degree virtual space wherein no aspects of the physical, or as practitioner Beth Kates calls it, the “carbon world” are visible (5). Among the many technological innovations afforded in VR, the element that I will be exploring in this paper is the notion of embodied spectatorship and how it is constructed and experienced through an awareness of being at once: a virtual spectator *that belongs* to the fictional world of the play, and as a carbon body that remains grounded *outside of* the fictional world. While some attention has been paid to the new design and storytelling possibilities afforded in VR, few have considered how VR spectatorship has the potential to create alternate modes of immersion, interaction, or how it might facilitate opportunities for subverting exclusionary structures of power. To address this, my paper will explore some of the ways in which participants are asked to engage with their virtual avatars in relation to their physical bodies as a means of encountering the virtual environment, themselves, and fellow spectators in CoAct Productions and Ferryman Collective’s 2021 VR show: *The Severance Theory: Welcome to Respite*.

Jayna Mees (she/her) is an artist-scholar who specializes in accessibility coordination/consultation, dramaturgy, and devised theatre. Currently, Jayna is a PhD student in Theatre + Performance Studies at York University and holds an MA from the Centre for Drama, Theatre, & Performance Studies at the University of Toronto. Her doctoral research examines access aesthetics and practices as modes of immersion within digital and virtual forms of immersive theatre & performance. Some recent projects include: accessibility coordinator for the SummerWorks Performance Festival (2021 -22), and assistant dramaturg for SpiderWebShow's VR production of *You Should Have Stayed Home* (2022).

LIAM MONAGHAN

University of Alberta

Strange Familiar

Play reading and paper

My M.F.A. Theatre Practice thesis is an original play, *Strange Familiar*, which is methodologically conceived as an “autofiction”—based partly on biographical fact, partly on fictional invention. The play tells the story of L., a queer man living in Vancouver, who receives an unprecedented letter from his birthmother. A crisis unfolds: should L. try to meet her, or not? Is it important to understand where we come from in a factual sense (biologically, legally), or is it better to live as freely as possible, finding meaning in the here-and-now? This dilemma obsesses L., leading him to unravel the threads of his homophobic Catholic upbringing in Southern Alberta; to expose and try to repair the fractures in his relationship with his boyfriend, J.; and to attempt to salvage some sense of spiritual wellbeing in the process. The play asks what it means—and what it takes—to love another human being, and it is a vital exploration of how contemporary queer people negotiate family belonging in Canada today, whether their families are birth, adoptive, or chosen. As an autofiction, *Strange Familiar* offers a provocation about the nature of truth claims, suggesting that we as human beings often locate meaning in narrative, fiction, and metaphor as much as in empirical fact, an observation which has profound exegetical and world-making implications for the challenges of living together in the coming decades, whether we identify as queer or not.

Liam Monaghan is a writer, theatre artist, researcher, and educator. He is currently an Instructor and SSHRC-funded M.F.A. Student (Theatre Practice) at the University of Alberta. His thesis project, *Strange Familiar*, applies research-creational and autofictional methods in

the writing of a new drama on the themes of queerness, adoption, and family belonging. His plays have previously been produced in queer theatres and festivals in Lethbridge, Edmonton, Halifax, and Victoria, and his essays have been produced in forums such as The Dalhousie Review, Alberta Views Magazine, and Ploughshares. He holds a B.A. Hons. and M.A. in English as well as a B.Ed. (Secondary) and taught in the Centre for Writing and Scholarly Communication at UBC Library before returning to grad school.

DANIELLA VINITSKI MOONEY

York University

Before We Were Punchdrunk: The Immersive Site-Specific Theatre of GALE Gates

Book talk

A book talk of my forthcoming Routledge manuscript, *The Immersive Theatre of GALE GATES*. My research focuses on experimental theatre company, GALE GATES, who scholar Dr. Marvin Carlson credits as “the true innovator” of the contemporary immersive movement. GALE GATES operated throughout New York City, internationally, as well as from its 40,000 square foot warehouse home in Brooklyn from approximately 1995 to 2001. The company was known for its large scale and spatially experimental productions, and was inspired by great literary works and historical moments, such as *The Odyssey*, *The Inferno*, the invention of the camera, and the burning of Rome. Despite a popular downtown following and a high level of notable reviews and funding over its lifetime, such as but not limited to: Art Forum, The New York Times, PAJ: A Journal of Performance and Art, The National Endowment for the Arts, and the Lower Manhattan Cultural Council, the company folded into obscurity. My manuscript employs descriptive-narrative and dramaturgical analysis, and is composed of historical research, rare archives, and primary source interviews. I propose a book talk presentation that focuses on company formation and early development, with an introduction to company site-specific and immersive dramaturgies. Previous selections have been published by Routledge (Physical Dramaturgy) and Theatre History Studies, as well as presented at the Association for Theatre in Higher Education (ATHE), Philadelphia Theatre Research Symposium (PTRS), Literary Managers and Dramaturgs of Americas (LMDA), the University of Bristol, and Counterpath Press in Denver.

Stopping Time: *The Pearl*, An Autoethnographic FilmNoir Sci-Fi B-Film Performance About Loss

Creative presentation/ Performance

I propose an integrated critical essay presentation and live performance, focusing on my current work-in-progress, *The Pearl*. *The Pearl* is an experimental autoethnographic solo work centering the story of my father, a major Canadian scientist who entered premature disability and death due to medical malpractice, and its impact on me as a young actress and artist. *The Pearl* is inspired by my time working for a Flamenco company in New York around the time my father was diagnosed with dementia, and utilizes original text, multimedia, choreography, and installation. It is also a play about justice, and primary research including original medical and court archives are used. The piece borrows from film noir and sci-fi B film ambience and DIY aesthetic, and also integrates a metatheatrical approach through an additional character of “The Artist”, who continuously interrupts the action to comment on the show. Dramaturgical focus includes the role of archive and the friction between live and filmed event. More specifically, I am concerned with the function of staged memory from a narrative, spatial, and kinetic lens, and how repetition and the surreal dramaturgically inform a play about mourning, loss, and dementia. For this presentation, I will be focusing on the artistic challenges of the piece, including the role of lead artist, dramaturgical experiments, and the artistic process found both within research-creation and a pivotal return to performance as artist-scholar. *The Pearl* was workshopped at York University in spring and fall of 2022, with the hope of a Toronto mount and festival tours.

Daniella Vinitzki Mooney: I am a peer-reviewed published PhD Canadian practitioner-scholar new to Toronto working in the intersection of experimental theatre and identity, with an emphasis in devising, multimedia, and performance. My academic research focuses on site-specific and immersive works. Most recently, I taught for the University of Pennsylvania and dramaturged for PlayPenn. I am currently pursuing my MFA in Performance Creation at York University and my forthcoming book on the immersive theatre is due to launch through Routledge this December 2022. My current project is an autoethnographic multidisciplinary solo show concerning the intersections of medical negligence, daughterhood, and artist identity.

EVAN MORITZ

University of Toronto

Deep Time Network
Performance

Deep Time Network is my ongoing solo performance. This is the second iteration of this ongoing project which merges science fiction storytelling with live electronic music. In this

iteration, “A Long History of the Necropolis on Pluto,” I narrate the development of a vast supercomputer on Pluto called the Necropolis where ultra wealthy patrons upload their consciousness upon death (or even before). I explore the history of this fictitious technology dialectically, describing the class conflicts, trolling, protests, and terrorist actions responding to this technological upheaval. I also tell far-future stories of interstellar travel by these undead humans and the empires which grow in their wake. Throughout the piece, I contextualize the sci-fi stories and poems with my thoughts about how these characters and stories relate to historical and contemporary questions about co-existence, technological development, and the necessity of death in society.

Evan Moritz is a PhD student at the University of Toronto’s Center for Drama, Theatre, and Performance Studies. He is interested in the outer limits of science-fiction and fact with performance and research exploring the future of Indigeneity and settler colonialism, global catastrophe on Earth and off, utopias, dystopias, and the impact of science fiction on contemporary practices. His ongoing performance project, Deep Time Network, blurs the lines between sci-fi storytelling, research, music, and podcasting to explore these themes.

COLLEEN OSBORN

University of Toronto

THEY ALL ROLLED OVER

Performance

Glum is a hobo-tramp clown — the defeatist, nothing goes right, why bother sort of clown. Spark has hope, joy and childlike innocence all wrapped in a red nose and an infectious smile. Jobber is bossy, he knows best, he likes order. They all keep the machine rolling all under the watchful eye of the Whistle-Boss, no matter what.

Background note on the settings: The bed is inspired by inhumane sleeping arrangements at the Dachau concentration camp in Germany. According to a guided tour, three men would be crammed into a small bed and woken up every few hours by the sound of a whistle to get them to roll over. This was done to keep their circulation going so that they were able to work the next day.

The assembly line is inspired by the collapse of a Bangladesh factory in 2013 where a worker supposedly complained of the unsafe building conditions before the collapse occurred and was ordered back to work.

Cast & Crew: Glum: Shelley Mayer, Spark: Yinan Zhou, Jobber: Ethan Persyko, Whistle-Boss: Doga Melisa Demirer, Writer/Director: Colleen Osborn, Assistant: Tara Maher, Stage Manager: Hemali Ratnaweera, Video: Alex Boothby

Colleen Osborn completed her MFA in Creative Writing at UBC in 2017 with a focus on playwriting and graphic novel. Staged productions include: *The Apologist* (2019), *Sweet Girl Shrapnel* (2018), *Take It Easy in* (2017 & 2019), *Bonds Beyond* (2016), *Tripping with Trump* (2016), *Botched* (2013), *Sweetness Follows* (2013), and *Fecal Monologues* (2009). Colleen has been published in “City Voices: Book of Monologues by Toronto Artists”, “Music Men Ruined for Me Vol. 2”, and her comic response appears in Adam Lazarus’ play, *Daughter*.

MATHILDE PERAHIA

From the Other to the “in-between”: examples of a new utopian corporeality in the Quebec circus

Creative/ embodied presentation

This communication examines two Montreal artists Andréane Leclerc and Émile Pineault as examples of a circus trend that presents a utopian imaginary of the body. Based on a socio-aesthetic analysis, this intervention fathoms how this corporeality is a discursive posture that reflects a specific relationship to the world in which all elements are reconciled. It is a way to rethink the notion of other, of border, of limit, of hierarchy and it represents an ideological rupture in circus practice. To describe these new modes of being and of creating translated into those imaginaries of the body, I have developed the notion of *Entre*, “in-between”. Inspired by queer thinking, the notion of *Entre* is a conception of the world from the cracks rather than from the extremities and the categories. It is a wish to challenge the binary, to reconnect with the environment, it is a horizontal and circular rather than one-way vertical relation to the world. Triggered by those artists and supported by the desire to look for new ways to communicate research, I will explore an embodied presentation in order to present physically what the *Entre* is really about.

Mathilde Perahia has a PhD in Humanities from the Concordia University since summer 2021. In her thesis she analysed several Montreal-based circus performances using a personal interpretation of queer theory. She is also a circus practitioner, has taught theory and practice in various contexts and now works for the national circus alliance in the development of continuing education.

JEANETTE REYES

University of Toronto

Performing Philippines in the Americas

Interactive Tinikling Dance

Am I Canadian if my parents are immigrants? This question, reflected by many first-generation immigrants is a statement of our yearning for a succinct identity. Am I more Asian or am I more Canadian? Stuck in the realms of the "in-between", *Performing Philippines In the Americas* creates tension and possible resolution to how we see ourselves in Canadian spaces. In collaboration with a local Filipinx community (to be revealed soon), we learn how Philippine theatre made its way to the Americas, we dance with bamboo sticks, we make mistakes, and we discuss the importance of representation in Canada. Key questions in this explorative workshop are: How can we reclaim identity, without claiming space that isn't ours? Who are we, if not Canadian and/or other? How can we use theatre, performance, and drama to bandage the hurts of being part of marginalized communities? How can our ethnic backgrounds and heritage be a strength in research practice?

Jeanette Reyes (she/her) is a first-generation Filipina Canadian artist, producer, and designer. She is a current MA candidate at the Centre for Drama, Theatre and Performance studies. She holds a BFA from Toronto Metropolitan University's (TMU) Performance, Creative School specializing in the Production and Design program, and double minors in Acting/Dance and Sociology. Jeanette's current research interests focuses on theatre and performance as a pedagogical tool to aid students and teachers in times of mental health exhaustion. Jeanette's knowledge of theatre and sociology has equipped her with valuable experience in developing meaningful projects to impact marginalized communities. Currently, she is developing her thesis on exposure to performance art and drama in the classroom, and how pedagogical practice can empower students in times of social injustice.

RE (REANNA) PARSONS

Queen's University

"To love a place is not enough": A Discussion on Embodied Eco-Art

Creative Presentation

Over the past 30 years, artists have been responding to the rising severity of the climate catastrophe through an influx of eco-activist art. While this era of eco-art has proven to us that climate change is visceral and that our bodies are interlaced with our environment, little work has been done from the theoretical lens that posits the body as a participatory creative medium and site of socially engaged pedagogical inquiry. This is where my research intervenes, primarily through a dance-based method; I respond directly to the need for alternate forms of pedagogy and activism to create substantial, socially just, sustainable change. I will be presenting and discussing my research-creation project, “Waves of Witness”, as an example of how performance can become a site for community-engaged, local activism that is built on the knowledge of the body as a pedagogical tool. My work engages specifically with disrupting destructive social patterns perpetuated not only by simply being unaware of our disconnected western ways of being but also enforced by these so-called common-sense logics. I experiment with collaborative dance choreography alongside other-than-humans such as the Saint Lawrence River and waterfronts surrounding the Kingston area in order to rupture the unthought expectations of human-nature relations. This presentation is an invitation to all artists who are interested in employing site-specific performance spaces that imagine new ways of living a future together and expanding their art into wider participatory, embodied experiences that create new future imaginaries. It is also an invitation to any and all who wish to learn about and discuss the very topic of eco-art performance and its importance to the vitality of our future.

Re (Reanna) Parsons is a Katarokwi (Kingston) based research-creator with an interdisciplinary background in dance, performance art, ecocriticism, and radical pedagogy. They earned their BA in Dance and BA in English from the University of Calgary before spending a year as a preschool teacher. They are currently pursuing a Master’s degree at Queen’s University in Cultural Studies with a focus in research-creation. Their work and research engages primarily in Indigenous and performance theory-based ecocritical discourses that surround the phenomenological experience. Re works through various systems theories to explore the relationality between, within, and across forms of life.

HAILEY SCOTT

York University

Audiences in Action: The Psychological Dangers in Participatory Theatre

Paper presentation

The emergence of participatory theatre begs audiences to radically suspend their disbelief to immerse themselves in the dramaturgical composition of a mimetic performance. Stemming from a formative experience at Sleep No More, my research is grounded in audiences engaging with the dangers hidden behind the curtain and how artists must make theatre a compelling and safe experience for their vulnerable patrons. My research analyzes how artists can make their participatory performances psychologically accessible without compromising their creative intentions. With the growing awareness of mental health, artists now find themselves with a newfound responsibility that encourages them to ensure their spaces are not just physically accessible but psychologically accessible. My research connects with this year's conference theme by illuminating how artists must use immersive storytelling that is psychologically considerate to maintain the poignancy and "togetherness" of the performance's political, social, and artistic objectives. My research is informed by interviews with mental health professionals and texts focusing on the psychological construction of emotion and trauma. I analyze Antonin Artaud's Theatre of Cruelty theory and introduce a new theory I created: "Theatre of Care." Next, I investigate where the danger lies within these theories and how artists can exploit audience emotions for the sake of immersion. To provide examples, I conduct case studies of participatory performances to illustrate successful applications of audience safety and potential dangers. Finally, I highlight dramaturgical elements that can incorporate psychological safeguards in participatory performances. My results suggest that individuals construct their emotions from past experiences that influence their perception of the art form. Although marketed as different audience experiences, Theatre of Cruelty and Theatre of Care present potentialities for triggering psychological harm due to their immersive representation of reality. Consequently, artists must implement psychological safeguards, both dramaturgically integrated and externally available, to reduce the likelihood of psychological harm.

Hailey Scott: I am a Theatre and Performance Studies master's student at York University, where I am researching the psychological dangers in participatory theatre. I graduated from Queen's University with a Bachelor of Education in English and drama. I am currently practicing as an OCT-certified teacher teaching English as a second language. I have worked with Dr. Glenn Willmott and Dr. Stephen Ross to generate innovative, immersive, and engaging pedagogical reading practices in university classrooms. I have also worked with Dr. Asha Varadharajan to conduct research for a university course exploring the artistic representations of marginalized communities in Canada. I had the opportunity to collaborate and work with Dr. Jenn Stephenson, where I researched audience theory in participatory theatre. I presented my thesis at the Inquiry @ Queen's conference and won the CFRC paper



prize. In conjunction with CFRC radio, I created a full-length documentary that explores the intricacies of my research.

CYRUS SUNDAR SINGH, SHELLEY HAMILTON

Toronto Metropolitan University, York University

Dogs, Gods and City Hall: The Racialized Legacy of the Displaced Africville Community and the Unconscionable Actions at City Hall

Co-creative performative documentary presentation

Dogs, Gods and City Hall is a collaborative 50-minute co-creative presentation that engages practice, theory and performance in the framing of the narrative. The participants are immersed in experiential learning that places them inside Canadian history thereby complicit in creating, disseminating, and archiving the narrative. It is a participatory-performative-liveness that is based on the author's ongoing research with the community of Africville. The presentation contains verbatim transcripts from interviews conducted by the author. All audio elements of this presentation were also captured by the author on multiple research trips to Africville, Nova Scotia spanning five years. *Dogs, Gods, and City Hall* traces the racialized legacy of the community of Africville, Halifax, Nova Scotia: an impoverished African Canadian or Afro-Canadian community that was systematically demolished during the 1960s; its homes razed, and its residents forcefully evicted in the name of progress. Four decades later, the City of Halifax officially apologized and accepted its culpability in the destruction of Africville and returned three acres of appropriated lands for a commemorative Africville Park. In addition, the city allocated funds to build a replica of the Seaview United Baptist Church, the heart and soul of the community, which was bulldozed in the middle of the night. The triumvirate of story, performance, and audience is used to create an interactive and immersive live-documentary experience incorporating oral storytelling, poetry, musical score, archival materials and television.

Cyrus Sundar Singh is an AcademiCreActivist—Gemini Award-winning filmmaker, scholar, songwriter, composer, poet, and change-maker pushing conventional boundaries presenting his research, films, and music at numerous national and international broadcasts, festivals, and conferences. A much sought after creative scholar and guest lecturer, his research and productions have taken him around the world including India, Israel, Spain, Haiti, Jamaica, and Sri Lanka. On the foundation of his documentary/storytelling career that began with his Award-winning NFB debut *Film Club* (2001), Cyrus conceived and successfully produced the site-specific live-documentary world premieres: *Brothers In The Kitchen* (2016) and two



iterations of *Africville in Black and White* in 2017/18—a nascent hybrid methodology that is foundational in his doctoral dissertation *Performing the Documentary*. Most recently, Cyrus successfully produced, and mentored the *cross-Canadian i am...* storytelling project: 28 short-films by graduate students exploring identity and belonging—all from within their individual pandemic bubbles.

Shelley Hamilton: Nova Scotian, Toronto-based recording artist Shelley Hamilton is a singer, actor, host, producer and writer. Africa Nova Scotian Music Association’s 2019 artist of the year, Shelley has worked internationally from Dubai to Japan, sung on award winning albums (a 2003 Juno for the album *ALLEGRO* by Robert Michels) and done everything from a cappella with stand-up comedy, to singing the Rolling Stones classic “Gimme Shelter” beside the legend herself, American soul and gospel singer – Merry Clayton. Her most recent works as a Black woman in country and folk music have been recognized with a 2019 Nomination – Canadian Folk Music awards (for the album *The Afro-Metis Nation – “Constitution”*) & an African Canadian artist of the year nomination for the 2020 East Coast Music Awards

LIB SPRY

Concordia University

!Unsettling!

Interactive, relational life-sized board game

“Under what circumstances would those who are the beneficiaries of colonialism stop denying and choose to act differently?” Paulette Regan

!Unsettling! is an interactive, relational life-sized board game designed to enable Canadian colonial settlers to examine their biases, prejudices, and privileges in relation to the first peoples of this land and explore actions they can engage in to decolonize themselves and Canada. I believe that embodiment, sound, images, humour and active play, in which the participants involve their bodies as well as their minds, are tools that can help create this change. Originally developed for my research-creation PhD in Cultural Studies at Queens University, !Unsettling! uses methods from community arts, clown and buffon, board games, theatre games, popular theatre, social practice, quiz shows, and Theatre of the Oppressed techniques that aim to break down settler tendencies, such as defensiveness (“This has nothing to do with me!”), guilt (“Oh those poor people, I feel so bad!”), or misplaced empathy (“We are all one”), while allowing the participants to deal with the uncomfortable realities about the land on which we live. With content based on research into the Indigenous reality in Canada and conversations with a cross-section of both Indigenous and



settler ranging in age from 12 to 72, I worked with a team of Indigenous and settler performers and designers to create and test this game. I consider it a finished first draft.

Thinking Outside the Black Box

Paper presentation with participation

What is considered Canadian Theatre comes from the traditional roots of British and French, theatre and denies the cultures that were here before. As theatre maker and scholar Sarah Garton Stanley points out in the first of her wonderful lectures *Massey and Me*, the Massey Report, the foundation of the theatre as we know it here, said “since the death of true Indian arts is inevitable, Indians should not be encouraged to prolong the existence of arts which - at best must be artificial - and at worst are degenerate.” How wrong he has been proven to be! What happens when we stop thinking of theatre in European terms? If, as Delaware playwright, poet and scholar Daniel David Moses proposes we use the idea of contrast instead of conflict? If we eliminate the concept of antagonist and protagonist, the audience in the dark and the performers in the light? When the fourth wall is not just broken à la vaudeville, Brecht, Boal, Littlewood, and Punchdrunk, but does not exist? Where audience become players and performers become spectators? When other cultures and ways of doing are woven into our work? As an example of this kind of theatrical event, I will discuss !Unsettling!, an interactive, relational life-sized board game I have created. It is designed to enable Canadian colonial settlers to talk to fellow settlers about their biases and examine their prejudices towards the first peoples of this land using the theatrical fundamentals of play, sound, movement, and image. I will explore the challenges of creating, producing, and running this game as both a live and a hybrid live/digital theatrical event. As a companion piece I have also proposed playing the game as part of FOOT. This will be a lecture/conversation that will include participation.

Lib Spry has been a theatre maker for over 50 years as director, writer, producer, educator, performer, popular theatre worker and translator. She specializes in non-traditional theatre and is a teacher of Theatre of the Oppressed. She has founded three theatre companies: Theatre Agile (2011- present), Passionate Balance (1989-96) and, with Shirley Barrie, the award-winning Straight Stitching Productions (1986-96). She recently finished a PhD in Cultural Studies at Queens and now has a post doctoral fellowship with Nadia Myre at Concordia University. Recent work: dramaturg for Tessri Duniya Theatre’s Fireworks, directing the Theatre Kingston production of Daniel David Moses’ Almighty Voice and His Wife; TRIC 43.2 “Experiences from the Edges of the 8th Fire: Indigenous Sovereignty and Settler Responsibility / Expériences des bords du 8e feu : souveraineté autochtone et

responsabilité des colons” with Annie Smith; *TRIC* 42.2 “Being Old, Working with the Old, Performing Oldness.”

SARAH GARTON STANLEY

Queen's University, National Arts Centre

reCycling: Conversations at the End of Theatre

Creative/ embodied presentation

reCycling is part 4 of a 5-part audio essay intervention that charts the progression of Canadian Theatre since the adoption of the Massey Report in 1951 to today. Each essay is roughly 30 minutes in length and all 5 are influenced by the Massey Lecture series, both in form and in response to the lecture series' predisposition to the canonization of content and ideas. Part 1 Massey and Me: Conversations at the End of Theatre was presented at Luminato. This performance traced the story of Vincent Massey and tied him (in all its discomforts) directly to me. While the audio of my voice played, I stood silent behind a microphone watching you watching me, listening to my voice and to the implications it carried. Part 3 Stumped: Conversations at the End of Theatre was presented at Rhubarb! It was created in response to the proposal of decay and rejuvenation proposed by eco sculptor Andrea Shin Ling and the audience was invited to interact with the decomposition while my voice shared an auto-ethnographic response to institutional demise and reconstruction. Part 4 focusses on The Cycle, a 7-year dramaturgical mega project that I led at the National Artist Centre, that spent time and resources on 3 specific areas impacting storytelling on Turtle Island: Indigenous creation, Deaf Disability and Mad Arts creation and considerations of the Climate Catastrophe. Each two-year inquiry was influenced by ideas of possible worlds and transformation. Through an ever-heightening lens of abolitionist ideas, SGS aims with this new piece, reCycling to reflect on qualitative notions of becoming and the limitations of “evolving” as an idea for change. This too will be pre-recorded with the possibility of a timed slide show presentation to support with me lit by the projections as I mouth the recorded words.

Director, dramaturg, producer and Ph.D. Candidate in Cultural Studies at Queen's University, **Sarah Garton Stanley** (SGS) is from Montreal, now lives on the unceded and ancestral lands of the Mi'kmaq People in Nova Scotia where she co-stewards Birchdale Lake. She is the Artistic Producer for The National Creation Fund at the NAC, and as the Associate AD of English Theatre she led The Cycle(s). She is the founding Artistic Director of SpiderWebShow, and co-founder of FOLDA. Recent directing credits include Everybody just C@lm the F#ck

Down (Robert Chafe) and Calpurnia (Audrey Dwyer) and Dramaturgy for I Forgive you (Scott Jones and Robert Chafe) and the upcoming adaptation by Brad Fraser and directed by Jill Keiley of Richard II at Stratford. SGS presented part 3 of their 5-part embodied audio essay series Conversations at the End of Theatre at Rhubarb! in February 2022 and part 2 at Luminato in June.

EZGI TÜRKER

threshold

Performance

threshold is a performative research on the possibilities of connections of different bodies and minds. It searches for ways of dilating from one body to multiple, extending from one mind to others. It questions "the solo" as change maker for the greater good and it asks others to be included to the collective with the art. My body is not my slave. My body is my collaborator. My body draws my contours. My body states my existence in this world. My body is the embodiment of myself in this realm. My body is my space. My body is my existence. My body tells a story, which story? where is the threshold? when is the line? between me and "others". others that live with me. others that exist as an extension of me. what bonds us? how is the boundary between different bodies. i long for different bodies to be with me. i want strange bodies to think with me. to surpass the threshold. to tell stories and narratives. to see. to change. to help. to be. together.

Ezgi Türker studied Political Science in Istanbul and Budapest. She started her dance&performance training in 2008. She earned her official certificate on modern dance in 2016. She performed in "Une vie, combien ça coute?" (2018) "gaze into the void" (2019) and "dark matter." (2022) by Ufuk Senel. In 2019, she initiated aeigis with Şima Uyar. Together, they created a lecture-performance series on contemporary dance history. First work of the series is "Trio F5" (2019) on Yvonne Rainestebaner, Trio A and No Manifesto. For second project of the series, they created and performed "Heads/Tails" (2019) on Merce Cunningham and his chance choreography method. She performed her solo performance "I Don't Want Any Plastic Cutlery" (2022) in Izmir. She is part of the purespace and arts & dance studio in Istanbul. She initiated a discussion series 'Let's Talk' within purespace in 2021.



ZHEHUI (CICI) XIE

University of Toronto

Scholars Hate Her! Sulpicia the Satirist and the Question of Authorship in Conquestio

Sulpiciae

Creative/ embodied presentation

Lamentation of Sulpicia (Conquestio Sulpiciae) is a satiric text about anti-intellectual violence during the reign of emperor Domitian, and one of the most substantial surviving ancient poems in Latin written by a woman. This fascinating, short poem (70 lines) has been woefully understudied, with scholars obsessing over its difficult textual transmission and the biological sex of its author, but rarely actually examining its intricate poetics, politics, and performances of gender. The project works on areas in the study of Latin poetry, Roman satire, and gender in antiquity, but also introduces creative aspects and adaptations." (DETEXTUS official introduction). Many scholars have argued that the Conquestio is a 4th-century CE pseudo-Sulpicia or even a Renaissance era forgery. Often this issue of authorship has clouded any further discussion regarding the text's content, resulting in limited scholarship being done on this poem. We will introduce the controversies around the text, authorship, and date of the Conquestio in existing scholarship and argue that a 1st-century date of publication is the most likely theory. The DETEXTUS is a student research group that continues from an earlier project led by Dr Niek Janssen.

My name is **Zhehui (Cici) Xie** and I study Contemporary Asian Studies, Literature and Critical Theory, and Creative Expression and Society at U of T. We have been working on the DETEXTUS project for over a year now and would love to present about our progress so far, and offer suggestions to other student groups as we transition from faculty-led to self-led. We are eager to explore options and possibilities to make this project an even more multi-faceted and connective initiative.

Special Thanks:

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CDTPS Staff:

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