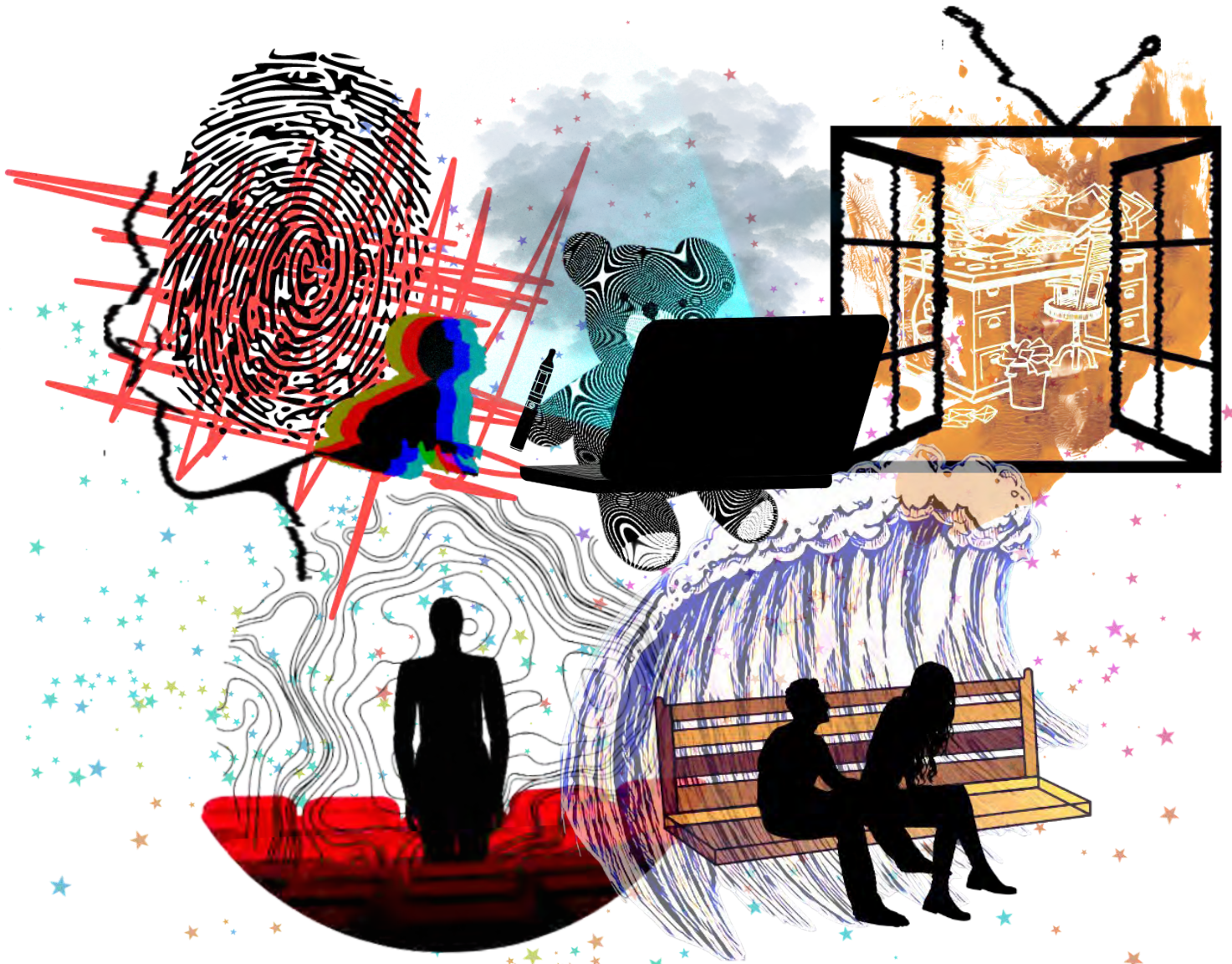




Centre for Drama, Theatre & Performance Studies  
**UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO**



# DIRECTORS' SHOWCASE



## **BAŅUTA RUBESS, COURSE INSTRUCTOR**

Dr. Baņuta Rubess pioneered feminist theatre, and contemporary opera to national renown in Canada and Latvia. She has lived in four countries and writes in two languages. In Canada, she created groundbreaking works for Nightwood Theatre, Theatre Direct, and Tapestry New Opera Works. As Associate Artist at Theatre Passe Muraille, she threw open the doors to a new generation of theatre creators. In 1998, she moved with her family to Riga, Latvia. She created productions across the

country, ranging from an immersive version of *La Ronde* to an adaptation of *The Trojan Women* performed on a beach. For many years she was a regular columnist in the national newspaper. Baņuta returned to Toronto in 2012. A Rhodes Scholar with a doctorate in history from the University of Oxford, she recently acquired an MFA in Creative Writing from the University of Guelph. She has been nominated for many awards and has won a few, including Best Play, Best Director, Best Short Story. She teaches theatre at the University of Toronto where she is lucky to mentor an amazing new wave of theatre makers.

## **SNEZANA PESIC, SET DESIGNER**

Snezana is a performance designer and educator. She has collaborated with companies such as the Canadian Opera Company, Canadian Stage, Confederation Centre of the Arts, Royal Manitoba Theatre Centre, Banff Centre, Theatre New Brunswick, *Against the Grain*, *Ghost River*, *Obsidian*, *Odyssey Theatre* and *Native Earth*, among others. Snezana's work has been presented in numerous international exhibitions, including *World Stage Design* in (2009, Seoul; 2013, Cardiff) and the *Prague Quadrennial* (2007, 2015). In 2019, she designed and curated the Canadian National Exhibition at the *Prague Quadrennial*, where designer Michael Levine received Canada's first-ever PQ Award for Excellence in Performance Design. Snezana won the Betty Mitchell Award for outstanding lighting design and production, was nominated for a Prix Rideau Award, and was shortlisted for the Pauline McGibbon Award.



# WUNCLE

WRITTEN BY STEVEN BERKOFF



DIRECTED BY  
CHLOË ROSE FLOWERS

DEC 2ND  
7:30 PM

DEC 3RD  
2:00 PM

# Director's Note

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*Lunch* is a marvelously intimidating One Act: its poetry is both dense and highly energetic. The challenge of directing such a fulfilling piece within the span of twenty minutes excited and, quite frankly, scared me. I'll be the first to admit that the piece is outdated, including misogyny in its raw form. In fact, in Berkoff's own writing about the piece, he provides superfluous treatment to the character of "Man" and disregards his play's other feminine half. Dr. Craig Rosen describes Berkoff as "The quintessential angry young man." He describes how Berkoff's interpersonal writing mirrors the vision he has of himself as an outsider.

Rosen's analysis feels incredibly poignant when looking at the raw text of *Lunch*. My intention was to look at this work with a critical, 21st-century eye. To me, I cannot help but read the relationship between Man and Woman as one that lacks consent: the notion of highlighting the relationship as such was incredibly important in guiding my direction. As such, I decided to explore Berkoff's piece as a memory play. I wanted the expressionist or surrealist elements of the piece to provide an artistic perspective of a traumatized brain: an exploration of PTSD and processing trauma. I hope that my feminist perspective will push Berkoff's piece in (if I may assume, what he may consider) a radical direction that has not been explored before. If Berkoff is, as Rosen puts it, a "quintessential angry young man" perhaps it is true then that I, as the director, have responded as a "quintessential angry young woman."

Thank you for joining us at this performance.  
Chloë Rose Flowers

# Cast Biographies



**ANOUSHKA PRASAD, WOMAN**

## **NICHOLAS SPINA, MAN**

Nicholas Spina is 20 years old and has a passion for the arts. He is currently in his third year studying drama at the University of Toronto. Nicholas has been trained in voice, movement, and clown by studying contemporary, Shakespeare, and poetic theatre. He's a graduate of the Regional Arts Program (Drama Major) at St. Elizabeth CHS. Nicholas has a passion for theatre and musical theatre and studied at the Children's Theatre Project and The Institute For The Performing Arts. He has appeared in numerous productions including *Wizard of Oz*, *Bells Are Ringing*, *Pippin*, *Gypsy*, *Chicago*, *Mamma Mia*, *The Little Mermaid*, *Twitch*, *Back to the 80s*, *The Baker's Wife*, and *Cyrano de BurgerShack*. Nicholas takes any opportunity he can to perform and learn. He is very excited to be taking part in this year's Directors' Showcase.



# Creative Team Biographies

## **CHLOË ROSE FLOWERS, DIRECTOR**

Chloë Rose Flowers is a director, producer, actor, and playwright. *Lunch* is her final project at the University of Toronto's Centre for Drama, Theatre and Performance Studies. She has a passion for bringing classical, historical, and mythological stories into the realm of the present and placing them in conversation with contemporary issues. Recently, Chloë produced *Romeo & Juliet* with Theatre Georgian Bay and the inaugural Simcoe County Theatre Festival with Theatre by the Bay.



Recent directing credits include *Crab Mentality* and *A Portrait of Two Men* at the University of Toronto. Her sincere thank you to everyone who helped to make this show possible, especially to Baņuta Rubess for all her guidance over the last four years.



## **BENNY SOAVE, COSTUME DESIGNER**

Benny Soave is a fourth-year student at the University of Toronto, completing a double major in cinema studies and theatre. He developed a passion for theatre as he started taking studio classes like playwriting and design. Last year, he had the honour of designing for one of the Directors' Showcase pieces and really enjoyed the process. This year has reignited his interest in design as he took in the role of costume designer for *Lunch*. He is excited for everyone to see the hard work the team has put into the production.

## TARA COSTELLO, LIGHTING DESIGNER

Tara Costello is a recent U of T alumna and current graduate student at Toronto Metropolitan University. She has won two Dougie Awards for lighting design at U of T and is happy to be back for this year's Directors' Showcase!



## SHREYA JHA, COMPOSER

Shreya Jha is a Toronto-based composer, lyricist, playwright, and medical student with a keen interest in the intersections between music and science. Her first musical *Statistics* debuted in 2019, won the 2020 Adams Prize for Musical Theatre at the Toronto Fringe, and was a shortlisted contender for the Playwrights Guild of Canada's Robert Beardsley Award. *Statistics* premiered at the Toronto Fringe Festival on July 6, 2022, and was called, "a foundation that deserves to be built upon" and "a truly great Fringe production." Shreya's other musicals include *Connections* (2019) and *18 Palace Road* (2021). Shreya has also written the music and lyrics for two other shows: *LUV*, premiered as a cast album in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and *Lady Macbeth of Mankota*, workshopped with the National Ballet School in April 2022. Shreya made her professional orchestra compositional debut with the National Arts Centre Orchestra in 2021. She has also worked with the CAN-AM Trio, the University of Toronto Schools, the Gryphon Trio, and the New York Song Collective. She has been commissioned by the Scarborough Philharmonic Orchestra multiple times since 2015. Shreya has scored two new films produced at the Toronto Metropolitan University and has written incidental music for multiple plays produced at the University of Toronto. Shreya's research interests include the impact of music on dementia, the psychophysiology of piano performance and the impact of music education on developing brains. She has developed a composition program at Sistema Toronto and has been published in *Frontiers in Psychiatry*.

## EMELIA FINDLAY, STAGE MANAGER



## NESS WONG, STAGE MANAGER

Ness is a multidisciplinary artist based in Toronto and is a recent graduate of the University of Toronto. In recent years, they have worked with or performed at multiple organizations, including the Canadian Opera Company, the Toronto Symphony, Shakespeare in Action, and the Royal Ontario Museum, in addition to several shows at the University of Toronto. They are excited to be a part of this wonderful show!



## ALIX SIDERIS, INTIMACY COACH

Alix is an accomplished actor, intimacy professional, movement director/choreographer, movement instructor, physical performer, writer, director, and meditation leader. Alix's recent intimacy professional work includes: *Civil* (Netflix); *Happily Undead After* (Canadian Film Centre); *Hamlet* (Stratford Festival); *Sin and Sorrow Are Common to All*, *The Judas Kiss* (Talk is Free Theatre); *Salome Learns to Dance* (Hawkeye Pictures, 2021); *Pomegranate Opera* (Buddies in

Bad Times, 2019) to name a few. Some recent performance credits include *Room* (u/s, Mirvish Productions); *The Cherry Orchard* (Modern Times Theatre); *Pride and Prejudice* (Theatre Calgary/National Arts Centre); *Metamorphoses* (National Arts Centre). Alix was a resident actor in the National Arts Centre's English Theatre Ensembles in its 2012/13 season. Recent media credits include *Assassins Creed: The Odyssey*, *Valhalla* (Ubisoft). Alix's short documentary film, *chemography: a study in light*, can be found on CBC Gem. Online: [alixsideris.com](http://alixsideris.com).

