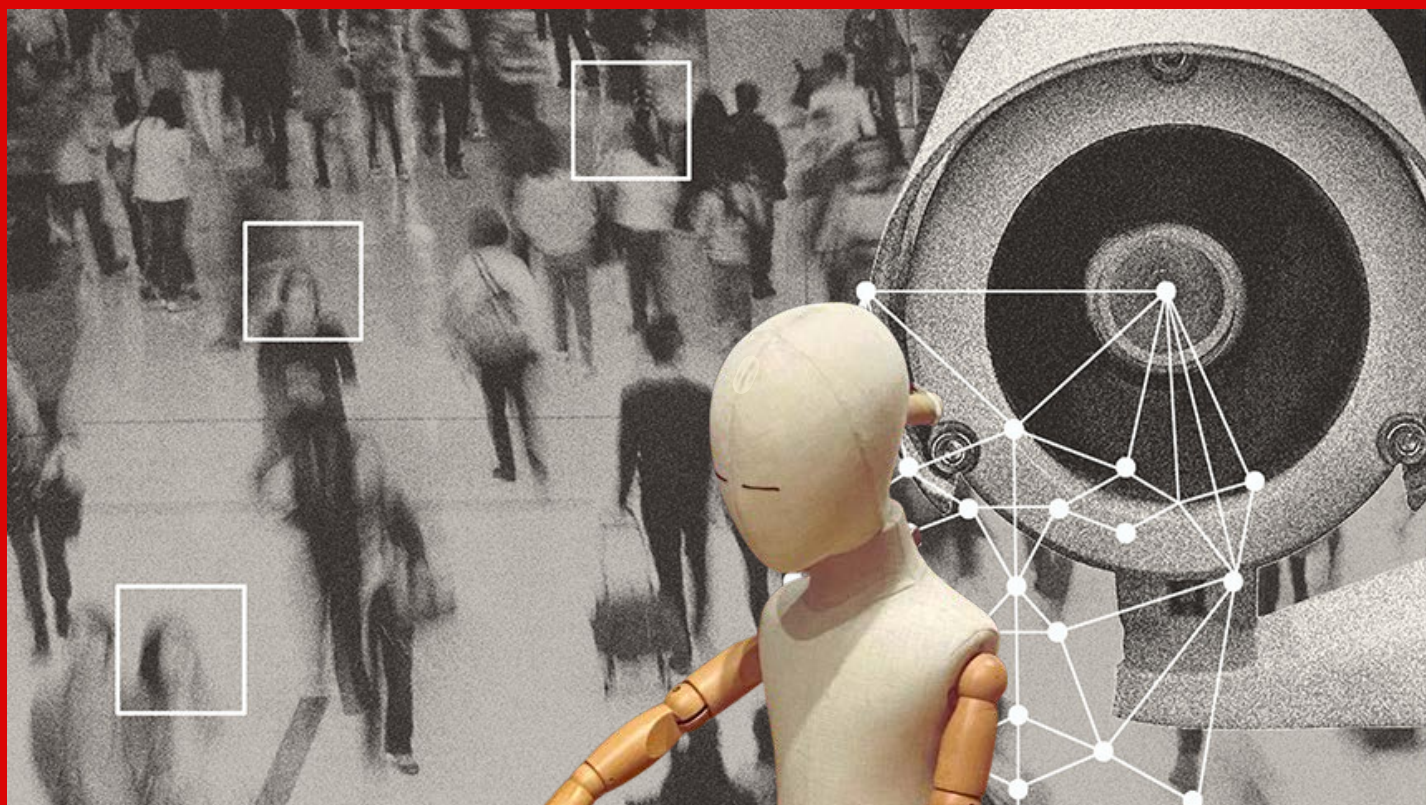


21.-23.4.
2023

Based on Günter Grass'
The Tin Drum



OSKAR

and the Screaming Drum
or A Tiny History of Violence

铁

皮

鼓



Centre for Drama, Theatre & Performance Studies
UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

Synopsis

Oskar and the Screaming Drum, Or A Tiny History of Violence is the combination of documentary theatre and literary adaptation loosely based on Nobel-winning German writer Günter Grass' novel, *The Tin Drum*. The novel's protagonist, Oskar, the child of a German father and a Polish mother, receives a tin drum on his third birthday and refuses to grow up ever after. Drumming his way through World War II, Oskar witnesses the ways in which fascism changes their city and family, and explores artistic means of intervention.

Inside the skin of the borrowed story of *The Tin Drum*, however, there is another subterranean storyline that resonates with the contemporary repercussions of the Global War on Terror in everyday life from a Chinese perspective, raising questions about the relationships between security and terror, technology and freedom, center and periphery, and “us” and a “them.” This half-hidden story—presented through documentary episodes—may echo or interrupt the fictional world of *The Tin Drum*, or may be completely irrelevant (or at least apparently so). We ask: What do we trade with power for security? Who are we being protected from? How to live a good life in the age of surveillance, spectacle, and war?

Starring a child mannequin and actors in non-traditional casting, this production explores new possibilities for identity visibility and experiments with aesthetics in intercultural and intermedial theatre.

Playwright's Statement

This play emerged out of real-life experiences of my friends and my own in Beijing, 2018. The urgency of the political situations we experienced—from varied distances and perspectives—necessitated a reflection on the social order we live in and my own role in it. In the aftermath, I investigated topics of surveillance and terrorism prevention policies. Some materials I gathered fall in the legal and journalistic definition of "document." However, personal accounts, social media, and conversations are equally important. Rather than investigating and presenting the "truth," I consider it more meaningful and perhaps only feasible for me to engage with what people consider to be truth, and the way their truths are constructed and disseminated.

While documentary theatre and adaptation of literary canon seem a paradoxical fusion, it is a natural and necessary form for me. On a practical level, *The Tin Drum* serves as a book cover that excuses me for telling stories that I otherwise cannot tell due to (internalized) censorship. Its literary mediation also allows me to critically distance myself from the real-life events, and to avoid laying claim over any sort of authentic representation of the living people involved, whose authenticity belongs only to themselves.

The Tin Drum is a novel about World War Two through the eyes of a German boy, who lives a domestic life largely removed from the frontier and atrocities of war. But is Oskar really removed? I read the novel as an illustration of how the state of exception creeps in and replaces the perceived social norms in a gradual and banal process, which is indispensable from each individual civilian's decision to look away, to defend

and justify, or to remain silent. This compliance with oppression in everyday life and what alternative options we could have chosen are the topics I explore in *Oskar*.

The combination of *The Tin Drum* and the stories I arrange from raw materials form a twofold play of a surface and an underlayer, where two stories are juxtaposed. This juxtaposition is made apparent and transparent, encouraging audiences to negotiate the relations between stories from the novel and real-life on their own terms. I insert *Oskar* in the fracture between dominant ideology(s) and dysfunctional reality(s), and hope this theatrical space could create a wiggle room where people can connect and breathe.

Credits



PLAYWRIGHT & CO-DIRECTOR

Yi Zhou (she/her)

Born in Manchuria and raised in Beijing, Yi Zhou is a writer, dramaturg, director, and designer whose works capture systems of oppression in everyday life through dialectical

snapshots and transcultural overwriting. Her recent credits are *Marat/Sade* (Beijing, 2018), *War Eagle* (Beijing, 2020), *V.A.B.E.L (Vom Armen Bertolt Brecht Et aL)* (Augsburg, 2022), and *Sky of Darkness* (New York, 2022). Yi Zhou has a background in Comparative Literature. Her current research focuses on modernism, biopolitics, and theatre art in the history of ideas.

CO-DIRECTOR & DRAMATURGICAL CONSULTANT

Myrto Koumarianos (she/her,
they/them)

Myrto Koumarianos (she/they) is a Toronto-based, first-generation Greek-Canadian immigrant-settler, a queer, mad/disabled theatre/performance artist and scholar, a writer, performer, director, and dramaturg. She is a PhD Candidate at CDTPS and WGSJ at UofT, and her dissertation is based on her embodied research with the Open Program of the Grotowski Workcenter in Italy, the USA, and Brazil. She has collaborated in various capacities with the Toronto Theatre Laboratory, Ars Mechanica, the Ditch Witch Brigade, the Digital Dramaturgy Lab, etc. Her performance practice is centred on work with song, especially songs of tradition, and she is especially drawn to experimental work in collaborative, devised, intercultural and multilingual settings.



SET & LIGHT DESIGNER

Evan Moritz (he/him)

Evan Moritz is a second-year 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

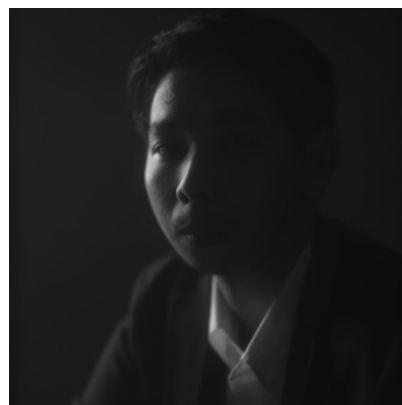
and fact with performance and research exploring these themes. His ongoing performance project, *Deep Time Network*, is a solo science fiction show about problematic futures. His thesis project, *Inuit Knowledge-Making and Modes of Scientific Research: Performing Ethnography and the De/Anti-Colonizing Challenge*, explores the key role performance plays as a procedure and apparatus for understanding local biomes, planetary effects, and extraterrestrial exploration.

PROJECTION DESIGNER

Noel Pendawa (he/him)

Noel Pendawa is an artist and filmmaker based in Tkaronto. Originally from Jakarta (Indonesia), he spent his formative years involved with an underground film collective called

The Anarcho Brothers, focused on documenting and celebrating the local metal music scene. He has had experience in digital archiving for IndoArtNow, a non-profit foundation to document art exhibitions made by contemporary Indonesian artists. After a few years, he delved into a more managerial role where he managed gallery to fair relations as the Exhibitor Manager of the art fair Art Jakarta. Now Noel is focused on creating experimental short films while researching the collective practice in Canada.



SOUND DESIGNER & COMPOSER

Devlin Flynn (he/him, they/them)

Devlin Edgar Flynn is an interdisciplinary artist based in Toronto, Ontario. They have been a prolific force in the Ontario music scene, having recorded seven albums between the 2015 and 2021, featuring him on guitar, vocals, keyboards/piano and drums, within a wide variety of genres ranging from folk to progressive mathcore. Theatre was revealed to them through working with Clay and Paper Theatre (2016-2021), as a performer, musician, and Music Director. Devlin continues to deepen his understanding of the shared languages between physical performance and music, and through this has developed a unique voice within each of these practices. Devlin is generally stoked about many things.

COSTUME & PROP DESIGNER, CAST
Lindsey Griffith (she/her)

Lindsey Griffith is a writer and artist working in performance. Her work mixes elements of experimental literature and contemporary performance with sculptural props and costumes to tell

stories that are absurd, funny, complex, and strange. She writes plays that are surreal and self-aware, often veering into the metatheatrical to create conversation between the text and the live performance. Her plays & performances have been presented at the Play/Ground Festival in Buffalo, Samuel French OOB Festival and Abrons Arts Center in NYC, POP! Festival in Montreal, and High Fest in Yerevan, Armenia. She received an MFA in Theatre Arts from Towson University in 2018. www.lindsey.zone / @lindseyolo



PUPPETRY CONSULTANT
Amelia Blaine (they/them)

Amelia McCarthy Blaine is a Toronto-based multidisciplinary artist specializing in stage management, puppetry, and design. Amelia is the Artistic Director of BadFox

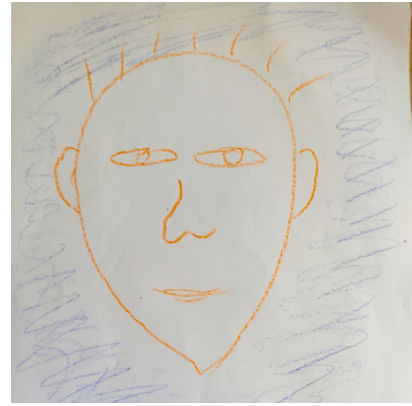
Performance, which recently presented a workshop of Mass Exodus at Tarragon Theatre. Select Credits include: Production Head of Props; *Rock of Ages* (Elgin Theatre), Creator/Puppeteer; *Halloween Hullabaloo* (Theatre Direct) ASM: *Otíhêw*, *Portia's Julius Caesar* (Shakespeare in the Ruff), Costume Designer; *The Bacchae*, *Romeo and Juliet* (Panoply Collective) Film: Puppet Builder; *The Lost Seahorse*, Puppeteer; *Bird Hostage*, *La Cumbia Del Oso*, *Fish Out Of Water*. Amelia graduated from Toronto Metropolitan University with a BFA in Theatre Production and Design.

PRODUCTION & STAGE MANAGER

Q**** (he/him)

Q (he/him) is an undergraduate student at CDTPS, also studying psychology and education. Recent credits include: 漂流 *Outcast* (Hart House Theatre), *He Said Yes / He Said No* (CDTPS), *Siranoush*

(RUTAS 2022, Theatre CorpOLuz), *Harabogee & Me* (Shakespeare in Action), *Snow in Midsummer* (Wychwood Theatre), co-producer of St. Michael's College Troubadours, 彼得、猫和他的狼同学 *Peter, Cat and his Wolf Classmate* (BONA Starlight Theatre). Q also volunteers for Toronto Fringe, SummerWorks, and Aranya Theatre Festival. As a newcomer to turtle island, Q is grateful to be living, studying, and creating on this land.



CAST

Katelyn Doyle (she/her)

Katelyn Doyle is a classically trained Canadian actor, currently based in Toronto. Selected credits include, *The Stranger Things: Experience*, an immersive theatrical experience; the short film, *GOOD LUCK* (directed by Debby Friday & Nathan De Paz Habib); the short film, *Popcorn* (directed by Sean Williams). Upcoming works include *Sisterhood* (directed by Heather Woolridge) and *#BOSSBABE* (directed by Kassy Gascho).

She is especially stoked to debut her puppeteering work, in this production of *The Tin Drum*. For a detailed outline of Katelyn's work and credits, check out her website at www.katelyndoyle.com. She cannot wait to share this work with you!

CAST

Monica Kopec (she/her)

Hey there! here's a bit about me: Recently I've been exploring my creative side, venturing towards pursuits including dancing, playing guitar, sketch comedy writing and performing, along with improvisation (I love being as silly as possible)! Previously, I worked as a patient actor in an educational setting and wish to do this again in the future. I enjoy combining improv and education to aid in building communication skills amongst health care providers. Other than that, during my free time you can find me playing sports (anything really, but volleyball, soccer and gymnastics are my favorites), reading and exploring unfamiliar places!



CAST

Tofu Mitchell (they/them)

Tofu Mitchell (they/them) is an undergraduate student going for a double major in Drama and Sexual Diversity Studies. They are delighted to be playing the role of Bebra, "The smallest show person in the world!" Tofu has been passionate about acting and theater since starting at age eight and has continued to perform in a wide variety of productions since. Originally from Victoria, BC, they have a history in both film and theater, and have acted in many professional productions. Aside from acting, they are also a dedicated slam poet, musician, writer and artist

CAST

Siena-heesoo Jang (she/her)

A curious enigma.



CAST

Micah Chu (they/them)

Micah Chu is an actor (sometimes) and hopeless romantic (at all times), who often appears as a paint-splattered mess. Having started in film, you can see their work in productions like *Gay Mean Girls S2* and *Fellow Travelers*. Most notably, his short film *Green Box Letters* won Best Film at the TIFF NextWave 48-hour Film Challenge.

CAST

Bebe Leung (she/her)

Bebe is a third year student studying at the University of Toronto, majoring in piano comprehensive studies. With much interest in acting, she has participated in a production of Shakespeare's "Macbeth". Bebe is very excited to be part of the production and to portray MAMA in the play.



CAST

Hannah Mitchell (she/her)

Hannah Mitchell is a theatre student graduating from the UofT/Sheridan College Theatre and Drama Studies program. Past credits include *Tartuffe* in *Tartuffe*, *Death in Everybody* and *The Dog in The Witch of Edmonton* with Theatre Erindale. For UTM EDSS, she has played Gallathea in *Gallathea*, achroma in *D E V O U R*, Leanne in *Fight or Flight*, Antigone in *Antigone Now*, and Andrea in *Death of Saleswoman!*, a piece which she co-created, as well as Mitchie in *Immortal Boys Club*. She was originally in the cast of this play in 2020 before the Covid-19 pandemic and is very excited to have audiences finally see this important piece of theatre!



CAST

Madeleine Thompson (she/her)

This is Maddy/Madeleine Thompson! I'm currently finishing off my second year at UofT, double majoring in Drama, Theatre & Performance Studies and Cinema Studies. Previous performance training includes: musical theatre at Bravo Academy for the Arts, acting and choir at Cardinal Carter Academy for the Arts, dance (jazz, tap, ballet) at Randolph College for the Performing Arts, and horseback riding (crazy i know). My aspiration is to be a superstar, love all my fans, xoxo, -Maddy.

ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGERS

L.Z. is an artist in Toronto studying theatre, drama, and performance.

X.X.

Docufiction Theatre Co-creator
Siting Yang

Special thanks to

Ariel Martin-Smith (CDTPS Manager of Theatre Operations),
Adrien Whan (CDTPS Technical Director),
Tara Maher (Communications and Events Officer);

The CDTPS Programming Committee,
Prof. Tamara Trojanowska,
Prof. Nikki Cesare Schotzko,
Prof. Kathleen Gallagher,
and **Prof. Xing Fan,**
for supporting this project since 2019;

Prof. Joerg Esleben (University of Ottawa),
for his participation as the invited guest speaker to the
talkback/panel.

Sponsored by



Centre for Drama, Theatre & Performance Studies
UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO



UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO
SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES



Germanic Languages & Literatures
UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO



Centre for Comparative Literature
UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO