

**CDTPS PRESENTS**



# **THE TRIALS**

**BY DAWN KING**

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**DIRECTED BY  
ANDREW KUSHNIR**



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

WE WISH TO ACKNOWLEDGE THIS LAND ON WHICH THE UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO OPERATES. FOR THOUSANDS OF YEARS IT HAS BEEN THE TRADITIONAL LAND OF THE HURON-WENDAT, THE SENECA, AND THE MISSISSAUGAS OF THE CREDIT. TODAY, THIS MEETING PLACE IS STILL THE HOME TO MANY INDIGENOUS PEOPLE FROM ACROSS TURTLE ISLAND AND WE ARE GRATEFUL TO HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO WORK ON THIS LAND.



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# DIRECTOR'S NOTE

**I started reading Dawn King's *The Trials* for the first time with a lot of skepticism.** I find plays written about a crisis in the midst of that very crisis can often be didactic. Although her premise is quite straight-forward (the young people of the near future holding our generation on trial for the climate emergency they've inherited), I discovered — and continue to discover — how the total effect of her composition is surprising. The play invariably has me wondering: "How will I be judged?" It's about consequential legacy. An unsettling and fitting thing to sit with in the theatre.

The play is also about relationships and how prepared any of us may be to cope with a hostile climate. And I don't mean us and an increasingly hot and tempestuous planet — rather, each of us with one another on that planet. Do we not recognize how the temperature rising globally will also raise the temperature of our relationships, our quickness to conflict, our capacity to make sensible decisions, the demotion of compassion and kindness, the privileging of survival and forms of ruthlessness? This has been a compelling phenomenon for the Drama 403 ensemble to embody and explore at this historic moment.

I always value the theatre as a site where we can rehearse for life. Can the extra thought and conscience and staged action around this crisis now shift how we, as students and artists and audiences, move through the world afterwards? I've been distinctly inspired by our approach to this play — designed with an eye on sustainability, opting for reused materials or new things that have a foreseeable reuse: "cradle-to-cradle." I have relearned a key gift of the theatre: from constraints come opportunities. And how the path out of victimhood or helplessness is creativity.

**ANDREW KUSHNIR**

# CREATIVE TEAM

PLAYWRIGHT

Dawn King

DIRECTOR

Andrew Kushnir

SET & COSTUME DESIGNER

Snežana Pešić

LIGHTING DESIGNER

Vishmayaa Jeyamoorthy

SOUND DESIGNER

Olivia Shortt

FIGHT DIRECTOR

David Chinchilla

STAGE & PRODUCTION MANAGER Ariel Martin-Smith

CDTPS TECHNICAL DIRECTOR &  
VIDEO DESIGNER Adrien Whan

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR & DRM403 TA Robert Motum

ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGER Unwoo Ho

ASSOCIATE SOUND  
DESIGNERS Sungwon Cho, Evan Moritz,  
Larry Ng, Qilin Yu

ASSISTANT SET & COSTUME  
DESIGN LEAD & DRM354 TA Anna Paliy

ASSISTANT SET & COSTUME  
DESIGNERS John Cleave, Sichun Xia,  
Abbey Kowalski, Salma  
Qureshi-Wennekers, Xinyi  
Zhang

STAGE CREW Cass Aalbers-Davey, Jessie  
Chen, Kennedy McCarthy,  
Niamh Moll, Sichun Xia,  
Casper Yang, Winston Zang,  
Alyson Zhang, Abbey  
Kowalski



# CAST

ADA & DEFENDANT 3

Chloe Ali

NOAH

Phaedra Archimandriti

REN

Emily Beaubien

GABI

Elžbieta Chernyak

CHRIS & DEFENDANT 2

Hannah Chown

SYDNEY

Hannah DeVellis

GRACE

Fiona Du

KAKO

Cassandra Marrazza-Radeschi

MAREK

Skylar Petrah

TOMAZ & DEFENDANT 1

Ethan Verderber

# CAST



**CHLOE ALI**

**ADA & DEFENDANT 3**

Chloe is a theatre and performance artist in her fourth year of her undergrad in Theatre Performance, English, and Creative Expression and Society at U of T. She is often running around on campus with a coffee in hand and working with UC Follies as their Equity Director, previously Communications Director. Her most recent credits are *Dracula* (TCDS), performances at Drama Fest at U of T, and *Between the Sheets* (VCDS). She also

works part-time alongside her studies at the National Ballet of Canada. This show has been a joyful learning experience for Chloe, with newfound techniques in fight choreography and ensemble work. Working with the cast and crew of this show has been a moment to remember and she hopes you all enjoy it!



**PHAEDRA ARCHIMANDRITI**

**NOAH**

Phaedra is a fourth-year student pursuing a Drama Specialist and a minor in Cinema Studies. All the way from Greece, she has come to Toronto to pursue her passion for performing arts. Alongside her studies at the CDTPS, Phaedra has trained at the Guildhall School for Music and Drama and the British American Drama Academy. Phaedra's acting debut took flight at CDTPS's Directors' Showcase 2022 with *Let It Enfold You*. Recently, she

starred in the UC Follies production of *Danny and the Deep Blue Sea* at Theatre Passe Muraille. Now, Phaedra is thrilled to be working with renowned theatre director Andrew Kushnir, making this performance poignant as it signifies the closing chapter of her university journey before graduating in June. This show holds special significance for Phaedra and her enthusiasm promises to bring a vibrant energy to the stage!



**EMILY BEAUBIEN**

**REN**

Emily is a Singaporean-Canadian artist and is incredibly excited to be playing the part of Ren in this gorgeous production of *The Trials*. She loves food, fashion and romcoms. When she's not busy eating dinner, being incredibly well-dressed and watching movies, she also occasionally dabbles in acting, directing and producing theatre. She hopes you enjoy the show and thanks you for coming!





## ELŽBIETA CHERNYAK

**GABI**

Elžbieta is a third-year student double majoring in Drama and Cell and Molecular biology. Since falling in love with theatre at the age of six, Elžbieta has pursued a further career in the artform, completing a two-year acting program through the Singapore Repertory Theatre and continuing her education at the CDTPS. A passionate advocate for the dramatic arts in both film and live theatre, she has been fortunate to devote her efforts to numerous projects and short films. Classically trained as a guitarist and vocalist, her enthusiasm extends to art in all its expressions. She firmly hopes that this production will serve to inspire self-reflection in each audience member and to encourage the consideration of the responsibility we bear as human beings sharing our Earth with one another.



## HANNAH CHOWN

**CHRIS & DEFENDANT 2**

Currently pursuing her undergraduate degree in Drama and English, Hannah Chown is deeply committed to exploring the intersections of literature and performance. She's actively engaged in U of T's vibrant theatrical community, where she takes on the lead role in the upcoming UC Follies production of Henrik Ibsen's *Hedda Gabler*, set to grace the stage of Factory Studio Theatre in late March. Beyond the spotlight, Hannah is a formidable presence on the soccer field, showcasing her athleticism and dedication as a proud member of the Varsity Blues Women's Soccer Team. With her passion for performance and sports, Hannah exemplifies versatility and excellence in both her artistic and athletic pursuits.



## HANNAH DEVELLIS

**SYDNEY**

Hannah is a third-year student pursuing honours bachelor's degrees in English and Drama at U of T. She also works as a director, choreographer, and acting teacher for children's theatre at her alma mater, Ridley College. In her downtime, she enjoys writing original songs and screenplays. Select past productions include *The Funnies: Sketch Comedy*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, and *(Un)Mask*. She's also been awarded the Helen Gardiner Phelan Playhouse Scholarship, the Richard Naylor Acting Award (*A Midsummer Night's Dream*), Best Supporting Actress (*A Midsummer Night's Dream*) and Most Creative Performance (*(Un)Mask*). She would like to thank Ken and Patricia for seeing her potential in first year, and *The Trials* crew for making our show's sustainability initiatives possible. Special thanks to Mom, Dad, Wyatt, Emma, Zeynep, and Irene. Love to you all. Let it rip. @HannahEvy





## FIONA DU

## GRACE

Fiona is a fourth-year Drama Specialist student at U of T with a background in dance and aspirations to work in filmmaking. Outside of drama, she works in diversity, equity and inclusion advocacy, and mental health advocacy. She is very grateful for the cast and crew members who have worked so hard on this production. She hopes you enjoy the show!



## CASSANDRA MARRAZZA-RADESCHI

## KAKO

Cassandra is a third-year student, double-majoring in English and Drama, Theatre and Performance Studies. Her passion for the arts is lifelong, though her journey with acting began in the tenth grade, during her tenure in her school's specialized performing arts program. Ever since, she's dedicated a majority of her academic career to bettering her craft, and with this show takes yet another step toward her future as an actor.



## SKYLAR PETRAH

## MAREK

Skylar Petrah (they/them), an emerging talent in Toronto currently pursuing a double major in Theatre and Cinema Studies at U of T, blends theatre, cinema, writing, and fashion with unparalleled creativity. Their academic excellence and diverse training is in preparation for a promising career in acting beyond academia. They're also a cinephile, often found at Cineplex or TIFF. Fluent in English, French, and Kinyarwanda, with conversational Kiswahili and Luganda, Skylar brings

a rich cultural perspective to their work. *Minor Punctuations*, their play co-written with Aylin Salahshoor, won the first prize in the Norma Epstein Foundation Awards in Creative Writing at University College in 2022.



## ETHAN VERDERBER

## TOMAZ & DEFENDANT 1

Ethan Verderber (he/they) is a Toronto-based theatremaker pursuing a Specialist in Drama, Theatre and Performance Studies, and a minor in Cinema Studies at U of T. His time at the Centre has introduced him to the art of clown, devising practices, the precision of verbatim theatre, a healthy pinch of Shakespeare, and some of the gems of Canadian theatre. He has come to believe that the theatre can be a place where people can change on either side of the curtain, and his time

with Andrew Kushnir has only affirmed that belief; even if you do not leap out of your seat and demand change, we may think about things a little bit more, and maybe, eventually, that will lead to real change. His love of play in the arts and the absurd of the everyday inform every step of his process, and he hopes that you'll enjoy watching him get mean looks from the rest of his castmates all show long.



# CREATIVE TEAM



**ANDREW KUSHNIR**

**DIRECTOR**

Andrew Kushnir is a playwright, director, community arts worker and activist based in Toronto. Artistic Director of Project: Humanity, a socially engaged theatre company, and a leading developer of verbatim theatre in Canada, his plays include *The Middle Place*, *Wormwood*, *The Gay Heritage Project* (with Paul Dunn and Damien Atkins), *Towards Youth: A Play On Radical Hope*, *Small Axe*, *Freedom Singer* (with Khari Wendell McClelland) and *The Division*. A four-time Dora Award nominee and the inaugural recipient of the Shevchenko Foundation REACH residency prize, Andrew is a graduate of the University of Alberta's BFA Acting program (as a Loran scholar). He has held artistic roles at Crow's Theatre, the Stratford Festival of Canada, and Tarragon Theatre. In 2022, Andrew founded the We Support LGBTQ Ukraine Fund to assist NGOs with meeting the needs of LGBTQ+ Ukrainians trapped or internally displaced by war. [www.lgbtukrainesupport.com](http://www.lgbtukrainesupport.com)



**SNEŽANA PEŠIĆ**

**SET & COSTUME DESIGNER**

Snežana Pešić is an award-winning performance designer and educator. Her work has been seen across Canada and internationally. In Canada, she collaborated with companies such as the Banff Centre, Soulpepper Theatre, Canadian Stage, Crow's Theatre, The Confederation Centre of the Arts, Royal Manitoba Theatre Centre, Tarragon Theatre, Theatre New Brunswick, Against the Grain, Ghost River, Obsidian, Volcano and Native Earth, among others. Internationally, her designs were toured and per-

formed in the US, Norway, and Serbia and presented in numerous international exhibitions, including Prague Quadrennial (2007 and 2015), Innovative Costume of 21st Century; Next Generation and Costume at the Turn of the Century (Moscow, 2019 and 2015). Pešić is the recipient of the Betty Mitchell Award for outstanding lighting design, the Prix Rideau Award nominee, and was shortlisted for the Pauline McGibbon Award for emerging theatre artists. Her film *Suture* received an award for Best Experimental Short Film at TIFF 2022 and Veracruz Short Film Festival 2023.



**VISHMAYAA JEYAMOORTHY**

**LIGHTING DESIGNER**

Vishmayaa is a lighting designer and researcher based in Tkaronto (Toronto). She has designed all over the world, but calls Scarborough her home. Notable credits include designing for The Banff Centre for Arts and Creativity, Theatre Kingston, Soulpepper, and teaching lighting workshops on BIPOC centered lighting design. Outside of her design work, she is currently pursuing a JD at Osgoode Hall Law School.





## OLIVIA SHORTT

## SOUND DESIGNER

Olivia Shortt is a weirdo, noisemaker, video artist, wannabe fashion icon, curator, and troublemaker. Shortt's work is inspired by their love of camp, drag, and gender expression and its relation to Indigeneity. Highlights include Shortt's world premiere performance (Whitney Museum of American Art, NYC) of *For Olivia Shortt* by Pulitzer Prize-winning composer Raven Chacon (as part of Chacon's series *For Zitkala-Ša* as featured at The 2022 Whitney Biennial); their Lincoln Center (NYC)

debut playing percussion in 2018 with the International Contemporary Ensemble (Shortt is NOT a percussionist FYI); their film debut in Atom Egoyan's 2019 film *Guest of Honour*; and recording an album of Robert Lemay's music two kilometres underground in the SnoLAB, a Neutrino laboratory in Sudbury, Canada. Recent projects and works created over the last few years include commissions from the Blueridge Chamber Festival (Vancouver), Long Beach Opera (California), the JACK Quartet (NYC), and *Din of Shadows* (Toronto). Shortt is working on a new site-specific opera about museum repatriation/rematriation, *The Museum of the Lost and Found: gaakaazootaadiwag*.



## UNWOO HO

## ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGER

Unwoo Ho is a third-year U of T student studying Cinema and Drama. In her free time, she enjoys rewatching specific episodes of *The Office* and rom-coms like *The Princess Bride*. During the autumn and winter seasons, you may find her in the wild attempting to communicate with the local street cats known as raccoons, skunks or possums. Unwoo feels extremely privileged to work with such an amazing team!



## ANNA PALIY ASSIST. SET & COSTUME DESIGN LEAD

Under the supervision of Snežana Pešić, Anna Paliy acted as the teaching assistant to the costume and set design students in this year's mainstage production. She's a doctoral candidate at CDTPS working to complete her dissertation analyzing artistic receptions of Eastern European ballet across cultures at the start of the twentieth century. Her research explores how the sensory language of dance is historically interpreted by women spectators

in visual forms such as sketching, painting, and sculpture. Anna is a member of the Institute for Dance Studies, and enjoys practicing circus acrobatics and mixed media painting in her spare time! She lives in Toronto with her partner Chris and son Zachary.



## SALMA QURESHI-WENNEKERS

## PROPS MASTER

Salma Qureshi-Wennekers is a second-year English and Drama Major. She is a nine-time National Theatre School Dramafest provincial award winner, including outstanding achievements in design and stage management. Her previous work includes three summer seasons at Merriam School for Music as a set and costume designer. Salma is overjoyed to be assisting with the design of *The Trials*.





**JOHN CLEAVE ASSIST. SET & COSTUME DESIGNER & CREW**

John Cleave is a director, dramaturg, playwright, and scenic designer. Born and raised in Toronto, Canada, he's currently in his fourth year at the CDTPS. His most recent directorial projects include Paula Vogel's *The Baltimore Waltz* (Factory Theatre) and John Patrick Shanley's *Danny and the Deep Blue Sea* (Theatre Passe Muraille). Scenic design credits include *Acepto (I Do): The Musical!* (Vic's Cat Eye) and Maria Irene Fornés' *Letters from Cuba* at Alumnae Theatre. At home, he enjoys cracking open a cold one and grilling Texas-style barbecue with friends and family.



**ABBEY KOWALSKI ASSIST. SET & COSTUME DESIGNER & CREW**

Abbey is very grateful for the opportunity to be a part of the design and production groups for the production of *The Trials*. She is double majoring in Theatre and Psychology at the University of Toronto and is in her second year. She is currently involved with lighting design and operation work around campus. She wants to thank her professors, the cast, and the crew for making this production come together and supporting her work. She hopes you enjoy the show!

**SICHUN XIA ASSISTANT SET & COSTUME DESIGNER**

Sichun Xia is a second-year drama student from Guangzhou, China. She is very excited to assist on both the set and costume design, as well as operating sound and lighting, all of which she's gained incredible experience in. Additional credits include assistant stage manager for last semester's Directors' Showcase (*The Most Massive Woman Wins*) and stage manager for *Helen/Klytemnestra, Or Maneater*.

**ALYSON ZHANG ASSISTANT SET & COSTUME DESIGNER**

Hailing from China, Xinyi/Alyson Zhang is a second-year undergraduate student at U of T achieving a double major in Book and Media and Drama Studies. During her membership on the set and costume design team, she performed costume construction, set painting and installation, and aided Vishmayaa with lighting assembly. She hopes you enjoy the show!





## QILIN YU

## ASSOCIATE SOUND DESIGNER

From Beijing, China, Qilin Yu is a Drama, Psychology and Education student in his final year of undergraduate studies and most active as a stage manager and producer in student productions. Qilin has stage managed *He Said Yes / He Said No* (Directors' Showcase 2022), *The Most Massive Woman Wins* (Director's Showcase 2023), and *Os\*ar* (CDTPS), as well as producing the St. Michael's College Troubadours. Outside of school, Qilin has worked on *Siranoush* (RUTAS Festival),

*Harabogee & Me* (Shakespeare in Action), *Amistade* (Aranya Theatre Festival), *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Aranya Theatre Festival), and *漂流 The Outcast* (U of T Drama Festival). He is producing for the 2024 Aranya Theatre Festival this summer. Qilin would like to thank all of his mentors and peers who supported him through a wonderful journey of learning and professional development. Much love :)



## CASS AALBERS- DAVEY

## RUNNING CREW

Cassandra is a 2nd year student at CDTPS. They are an award-winning playwright and aspiring technician, designer, and director. They are delighted to be working on *The Trials*.



## JESSIE CHEN

## RUNNING CREW

Jessie is an undergraduate student pursuing a double major in Drama and Mathematics. Driven by her enjoyment of the allure and vitality of live performances, she embarked on the journey in Drama, theatre and design. In the past year, she contributed as the assistant set/costume design for the mainstage show *Don't Cry When Constellations Beg to Burn*, and as the set designer for *Sure Thing* and *The Most Massive Woman Wins* in the Directors' Showcase.

## NAIMH MOLL

## RUNNING CREW

Niamh is a third-year Drama Major at U of T and is interested in a career in theatre production. This is her first time as a lighting operator, though she has some experience in stage management and operating sound, and is enthusiastic to learn about all crew positions!



# **SPECIAL THANKS**

**Theatre and Drama Studies at the  
University of Toronto, Mississauga  
Department of Arts, Culture, and Media at the  
University of Toronto, Scarborough  
BMO Lab for Creative Research in the Arts,  
Performance, Emerging Technologies and AI  
Soulpepper Theatre  
Young People's Theatre  
Seika Boye  
Kathleen Gallagher  
CDTPS Staff  
Scott Hendershot  
Andrew Leeke  
Julia Matias  
Mark Wasyleczko**

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