

TARRAGON

16/17 SEASON



ARUN LAKRA'S
SEQUENCE

THE BASICS

Tarragon Theatre

Tarragon Theatre's mission is to create, develop and produce new plays and to provide the conditions for new work to thrive. To that end, the theatre engages the best theatre artists and craftspeople to interpret new work; presents each new work with high quality production values; provides an administrative structure to support new work; develops marketing strategies to promote new work; and continually generates an audience for new work.

(www.tarragontheatre.com)

Tarragon is located at 30 Bridgman Avenue in Toronto, Ontario, easily accessible from Dupont and Bathurst subway stations.

The Play

Do you believe in luck? A man successfully bets double or nothing on the Super Bowl coin toss for twenty years in a row. A professor races the clock on a groundbreaking discovery to cure the disease that is causing her own progressive blindness. Two fascinating stories intertwine like DNA, examining the interplay between science, faith, probability and luck.

Sequence Resource List

1. Ted Talk with Arun Lakra

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TTJt0YXR4uE>

In this engaging and perceptive talk given at TEDxRundleAcademy, a youth event, Dr. Arun Lakra turns our preconceived notions of the adage “follow your passions” and turns them on their head. Dr. Lakra suggests it is possible to dream big and live a passionate life, but sometimes, that passion is best followed if it is your “subplot”, not your job.

2. Nancy Kawalek

<http://stage.cnsi.ucsb.edu/collaboratory/>

The *STAGE* Collaboratory is a collective laboratory for creating and developing multi-media theatre pieces in which science and technology play prominent roles in content and/or form. An international array of professional artists and distinguished scientists come together in numerous residencies throughout the year to dedicate themselves to the inception and evolution of original theatre work.

<https://news.uchicago.edu/article/2012/08/23/nancy-kawalek-appointed-distinguished-fellow-arts-sciences-technology>

Nancy is passionately interested in dramatizing our scientific and technological world. Although Kawalek gravitated toward theater and the arts as a child, “I always found the sciences interesting,” she said. “I was one of those arts people who actually liked math and science. I’m not a scientific or technical expert by any means, but I appreciate how much science and technology impacts our lives.”

3. Kathleen Gallagher Conversation with John Mighton: Thinking Beyond the Boundaries of Theatre, Math and Reality

http://www.oise.utoronto.ca/dr/Home/John_Mighton_KG_Interview.html

Kathleen Gallagher conducted an interview with mathematician and Siminovitch prize-winning playwright John Mighton, in front of an audience at Hart House Theatre. The interview, staged as a lead-up event to the announcement of the 2013 Siminovitch Prize, addressed issues to do with education and theatre, and it demonstrated John’s unique interdisciplinary perspective on the role of theatre today. As well, interestingly John discusses recurring “academic boundaries” as an inhibitor to intersecting disciplinary studies.

4. Richard Wiseman: Be lucky - it's an easy skill to learn

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/technology/3304496/Be-lucky-its-an-easy-skill-to-learn.html>

About a decade ago, Richard Wiseman set out to investigate luck. He wanted to examine the impact on people's lives of chance opportunities, lucky breaks and being in the right place at the right time. After many experiments, he believes that he now understands why some people are luckier than others and that it is possible to become luckier.

5. Michael Mauboussin: Why We Don't Understand Luck

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gtjP8a24564>

Wall Street investment strategist Michael Mauboussin, author of *The Success Equation*, explains how split-brain experiments help us understand why we have a hard time understanding randomness and luck.

6. Jonathan Gottschall: The Storytelling Animal

<http://jonathangottschall.com/storytelling-animal>

In this original book, Jonathan Gottschall offers the first unified theory of storytelling. He argues that stories help us navigate life's complex social problems—just as flight simulators prepare pilots for difficult situations. Storytelling has evolved, like other behaviors, to ensure our survival.

Drawing on the latest research in neuroscience, psychology and evolutionary biology, Gottschall tells us what it means to be a storytelling animal. Did you know that the more absorbed you are in a story, the more it changes your behaviour? That all children act out the same kind of stories, whether they grow up in a slum or a suburb? That people who read more fiction are more empathetic?

Of course, our story instinct has a darker side. It makes us vulnerable to conspiracy, theories, advertisements and narratives about ourselves that are more “truthy” than true. National myths can also be terribly dangerous: Hitler's ambitions were partly fueled by a story.

But as Gottschall shows in this remarkable book, stories can also change the world for the better. Most successful stories are moral - they teach us how to live, whether explicitly or implicitly, and bind us together around common values. We know we are master shapers of story. *The Storytelling Animal* finally reveals how stories shape us.

http://www.nytimes.com/2012/08/05/books/review/the-storytelling-animal-by-jonathan-gottschall.html?_r=0

<http://blogs.scientificamerican.com/literally-psyched/the-storytelling-animal-a-conversation-with-jonathan-gottschall/>

7. The Luckiest Man - Frane Selak

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dZyUWLW7kEI>

Frane Selak is a Croatian music teacher who has allegedly escaped death seven times, and afterward won the lottery in 2003, prompting journalists to dub him "the world's luckiest man", and "world's luckiest unluckiest man".

8. Luck and Liberty: The Political Economy of Life Choices

<https://theses.lib.sfu.ca/thesis/etd9601>

The intersection of luck and socio economics is important to consider when discussing luck and it's implications. "Luck and Liberty: The Political Economy of Life Chances" is a thesis paper investigating the many other factors outside of a person's socioeconomic position that can influence life chances, such as place of birth, education and income, in addition to intersections with race, gender, or ethnicity, so that the lived experience of class often has a distinctively multidimensional character. The focus in this dissertation is directed at higher levels of abstraction dealing with the political economy of life chances as a feature of life in western capitalist liberal democracies—societies often promoted as the freest and the most equitable in the world.

9. Genetics of Blindness

<http://massgenomics.org/2013/07/genetics-of-blindness.html>

The genetics of inherited vision disorders — notably retinitis pigmentosa (RP) and age-related macular degeneration (AMD) — are an area of intense research. Numerous genes responsible for inherited retinopathies have been identified in the past ten years. At the time of writing, there are at least 242 different genetic disorders, with 202 different genes identified according to the Retinal Information Network.

By Nora Beqaj in consultation with Anne Weasels

