

Tarragon Announces 2018-19 Season

Toronto, February 22, 2018 - Artistic Director **Richard Rose** and Managing Director **Andrea Vagianos** today announced Tarragon Theatre's 2018-19 season: a nine-month calendar of seven distinct plays from far-ranging, genre-mixing and award-winning Canadian playwrights including two musical productions, two world premieres, and two Toronto premieres.

"As we pursue our goal of telling stories that reflect, enlighten, and inspire Canadians, the breadth of voices we are sharing this season is very exciting for me, Tarragon's staff, and I'm convinced our audiences will feel the same." said Rose. *"We will present a culturally rich season of plays that reflects our country's history, engages with contemporary Canada and looks to our future."*

Tarragon is thrilled to introduce its audience to exciting new homegrown theatre creators as well as national collaborations between artists with unique influences and cultural backgrounds.

The season opens in September in the Mainspace with ***Harlem Duet*** from Governor General's Literary Award-winner **Djanet Sears**. This rhapsodic blues riff is a prequel to Shakespeare's *Othello* and whisks the tale off to Harlem, where a college professor leaves his grad student wife for a white colleague. An iconic work that packs as powerful a punch now as it did when it debuted over twenty years ago. Directed by Djanet Sears.

The Extraspace season opens with ***Theory***, a play from the Herman Voaden National Playwriting Competition winner **Norman Yeung**. *Theory* is a hot button play for our times. Isabelle, a young tenure-track professor, tests the limits of free speech by encouraging her students to contribute to an unmoderated discussion group. When an anonymous student posts offensive comments and videos, Isabelle must decide whether to intervene or to let the social experiment play out. Directed by Esther Jun.

Following in the Mainspace is the world premiere from Tarragon's Bill Glassco Playwright-in-Residence and Governor General's Literary Award-winner **Jason Sherman**. Sherman's play ***The Message*** looks at the life of Canada's internationally renowned professor-turned-prophet Marshall McLuhan whose observations on the effects of technology were cut short by a stroke that robbed him of his ability to speak. What it couldn't do, though, was stop this deeply religious man from trying to finish his magnum opus: a last desperate attempt to save our souls — and his own. Directed by Richard Rose.

2019 at Tarragon opens in the Mainspace with a contemporary retelling of Inuit hero legend Kiviuq, in **The Qaggiq Collective's** production of ***Kiviuq Returns: An Inuit Epic***. Journeying across the vast expanse of the Arctic, beset by treacherous creatures wreaking havoc on his world, Kiviuq gathers strength from his ancestors and spirit guides as he defends his people and fights his way home. Music, drumming, dance, and storytelling combine in this thrillingly modern

TARRAGON THEATRE

evocation of ancient legends previously banned by missionaries and the Canadian government. An Inuit *Odyssey*, performed in Inuktitut with English surtitles.

Later in the Mainspace is the Toronto premiere of ***New Magic Valley Fun Town***, a co-production with **Prairie Theatre Exchange** written by Siminovitch Prize-winner and Governor General's Literary Award-winner for Drama, **Daniel MacIvor**. Cape Bretoner Dougie hasn't seen his best childhood pal Allan in 25 years, so it's no surprise their reunion is a boisterous night of memories, laughter, drinking and dancing. But as evening becomes day, as the smiles begin to fade and the bottles sit empty, the old friends revisit other memories, uncomfortable ones that force them to confront the realities of who — and what — they really are. With premiere's at Prairie Theatre Exchange in Winnipeg, Tarragon Theatre in Toronto, and Neptune Theatre in Halifax. Directed by Richard Rose.

Up next in the Extraspace is ***Guarded Girls***, a world premiere from Governor General's Literary Award-nominee **Charlotte Corbeil-Coleman** and presented in association with **Green Light Arts**. The psychological destruction brought on by solitary confinement is at the heart of this wrenching and powerful new play. When 19-year-old Sid is transferred to a new prison, she finds friendship with Britt — but also forms a complicated relationship with the guard who seems to be watching their every move. Soon, it's the guard who's being watched, as this playful, theatrical, mysterious work heads toward a shocking conclusion. Directed by Richard Rose. After Toronto performances, *Guarded Girls* is presented by Green Light Arts at the Registry Theatre in Kitchener.

Rounding out the season in the Mainspace is **2b theatre company's** high-energy, music-theatre hybrid concert written by Tarragon Playwright-in-Residence **Hannah Moscovitch** with songs by Klezmer-folk sensation **Ben Caplan** and **Christian Barry**. ***Old Stock: A Refugee Love Story*** is inspired by the real life story of Moscovitch's Romanian-Jewish great-grandparents who immigrated to Canada in 1908 seeking a second chance in the New World. Narrated by The Wanderer — part showman, part rabbi — this genre-bending concert won numerous awards at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival including the Herald Angel Award, The Scotsman Fringe First Award and was cited as one of The Guardian's Top Recommended shows. *Old Stock: A Refugee Love Story* visits Tarragon after performances in Halifax, Ottawa, Edmonton, and New York. Directed by Christian Barry.

In addition to its work on the stage, Tarragon continues to foster a home for playwrights to create and develop their work. The theatre remains dedicated to growing its **extensive youth programs**, and continues its collaboration with **Scarborough Arts**, three Scarborough secondary schools and the **University of Toronto Scarborough** for a third year. Tarragon continues to develop the country's most successful **new play development program**, as well as its **Beyond the Stage** programming which includes **Talkback Weeks**, **Lecture-Conversations**, and **Tarragon Tasting Nights**. The **Workspace** program continues to offer free development and performance space, as well as administrative support, to emerging artists

TARRAGON THEATRE

and companies in the community. The theatre also continues to grow its initiatives to welcome underserved communities into the theatre, including subsidized student matinees, and its **First Preview** program offering complimentary tickets to community partners. As well, Tarragon offers a **Rush Ticket policy of \$20** a ticket for almost every performance throughout the season.

The 2018-19 season is generously sponsored by **BMO Financial Group**.

AIMIA is Tarragon's Mainspace sponsor. **Laura Dinner and Richard Rooney** are Tarragon's Extraspace sponsor.

Tarragon Theatre 2018-19 Season Details

Harlem Duet

Written & Directed by Djanet Sears

September 18 – October 28, 2018

Mainspace

The return of a Canadian theatre milestone! Djanet Sears' rhapsodic blues riff on *Othello* whisks the tale off to Harlem, where a college professor leaves his grad student wife for a white colleague. The stinging abandonment leads to profound questions about love, loss, loyalty and race, played out over two centuries in a wide range of settings. An iconic work that packs as powerful a punch now as it did when it debuted over twenty years ago.

Harlem Duet is the winner of the Governor General's Literary Award, the Floyd S. Chalmers Canadian Play Award, and four Dora Mavor Moore Awards (Outstanding New Play, Outstanding Direction, Outstanding Production, and Outstanding Performance by a Female).

Theory

Written by Norman Yeung

Directed by Esther Jun

October 16 – November 25, 2018

Extraspace

A hot button play for our times! Isabelle, a young tenure-track professor, tests the limits of free speech by encouraging her students to contribute to an unmoderated discussion group. When an anonymous student posts offensive comments and videos, Isabelle must decide whether to intervene or to let the social experiment play out. Soon, the posts turn abusive and threatening, leading Isabelle and her unknown tormentor to engage in a high-stakes game of cat-and-mouse that not only have Isabelle questioning her beliefs, but fearing for her life.

TARRAGON THEATRE

Norman Yeung is the winner of the Herman Voaden National Playwriting Competition.

The Message

World premiere

Written by Jason Sherman

Directed by Richard Rose

November 7 – December 16, 2018

Mainspace

“Whatcha doin’, Marshall McLuhan?” That’s what the world wanted to know back in the 1960s, when Canada’s internationally renowned professor-turned-prophet started to sound the alarm on the effects of technology on the human body and spirit. But after a lifetime of warning us all about the hazards of modern life, McLuhan suffered a stroke that robbed him of his ability to speak. What it couldn’t do, though, was stop this deeply religious man from trying to finish his magnum opus: a last desperate attempt to save our souls — and his own.

Jason Sherman is Tarragon’s Bill Glassco Playwright-in-Residence and is the winner of the Governor General’s Literary Award winner for Drama.

Kiviuq Returns: An Inuit Epic

Created by The Qaggiq Collective

December 30, 2018 – January 20, 2019

Mainspace

Journeying across the vast expanse of the Arctic, beset by treacherous creatures wreaking havoc on his world, Kiviuq gathers strength from his ancestors and spirit guides as he defends his people and fights his way home. Music, drumming, dance, and storytelling combine in this thrillingly modern evocation of the legendary figure of Kiviuq: hero, seeker, wanderer. An Inuit *Odyssey*, performed in Inuktitut with English surtitles.

“Performed by a corps of unique performers with talents you won’t find south of the Arctic Circle, it has that strong sense of larger purpose often absent from theatre.” – Kelly Nestruck, The Globe and Mail

New Magic Valley Fun Town

Co-produced by Prairie Theatre Exchange and Tarragon Theatre

Toronto premiere

Written by Daniel MacIvor

Directed by Richard Rose

February 20 - March 31, 2019

Mainspace

TARRAGON THEATRE

Cape Bretoner Dougie hasn't seen his best childhood pal Allan in 25 years, so it's no surprise their reunion is a boisterous night of memories, laughter, drinking and dancing. But as evening becomes day, as the smiles begin to fade and the bottles sit empty, the old friends revisit other memories, uncomfortable ones that force them to confront the realities of who — and what — they really are.

Daniel MacIvor is the winner of The Siminovitch Prize and The Governor General's Literary Award for Drama.

Guarded Girls

In association with Green Light Arts
Written by Charlotte Corbeil-Coleman
World premiere
Directed by Richard Rose
March 26 – May 5, 2019
Extraspace

The psychological destruction brought on by solitary confinement is at the heart of this wrenching and powerful new play. When 19-year-old Sid is transferred to a new prison, she finds friendship with Britt — but also forms a complicated relationship with the guard who seems to be watching their every move. Soon, it's the guard who's being watched, as this playful, theatrical, mysterious work heads toward a shocking conclusion.

Charlotte Corbeil-Coleman is a nominee of The Governor General's Literary Award and a Dora Mavor Moore Award.

Old Stock: A Refugee Love Story

A 2b theatre company production
Toronto premiere
Written by Hannah Moscovitch with songs by Ben Caplan & Christian Barry
Directed by Christian Barry
April 16 – May 26, 2019
Mainspace

Halifax, 1908: two Romanian Jews stand in line at Pier 21 in Halifax, would-be immigrants to an unknown country. Chaim's entire family was murdered in a pogrom; Chaya lost her husband to fever and starvation. But the New World is giving them a second chance, and they embrace it to the fullest. Narrated by The Wanderer — part showman, part rabbi — this genre-bending music-theatre hybrid stars Klezmer-folk sensation Ben Caplan and is inspired by the real-life story of Moscovitch's great-grandparents.

Hannah Moscovitch is the winner of the Governor General's Award and the prestigious Yale University Windham-Campbell Prize

TARRAGON THEATRE

“Emotionally engaging, visually stunning and at 80 minutes leaves us still wanting more.”

★★★★★ - Musical Theatre Review

“A hugely engaging experience” - The Guardian

The Guardian’s Top Recommended Shows (2017 Edinburgh Fringe Festival)

HOW TO GET TICKETS TO TARRAGON SHOWS:

Subscriptions and tickets can be purchased online at www.tarragontheatre.com, by phone at 416-531-1827 or in person at the Tarragon Theatre Box Office at 30 Bridgman Avenue.

SUBSCRIPTIONS: Tarragon Theatre continues to offer the most flexible subscription packages in the city, allowing patrons to choose their productions and change their dates free of charge, and offering many different price points to suit all schedules and budgets.

2018-19 Earlybird Subscriptions

7 and 5-Play subscriptions are currently on sale starting at just \$22/ticket (a savings of 43%). 4-ticket flex packages will be available as of April 1, 2018. Earlybird pricing ends on May 31, 2018.

2018-19 Single Tickets

Single tickets will go on sale May 31, 2018.

ABOUT TARRAGON THEATRE

Tarragon Theatre is Canada’s home for groundbreaking contemporary playwriting. For over 48 years, Tarragon Theatre has created, developed and produced new plays by home-grown artists as well as significant works from the world stage, vitally contributing to the important legacy of a Canadian culture. Tarragon assists 30+ emerging and established playwrights each year through residencies, grants, dramaturgical support, and training programs. Patrons of all ages attend lectures, workshops, talkback weeks, play readings, and other events designed to engage audiences with new work. Since its founding, over 190 works have premiered at Tarragon and over 500 scripts have been created and workshopped, receiving 34 nominations and 11 wins for the Governor General’s Literary Award. Richard Rose has been the Artistic Director since 2002. For more information visit www.tarragontheatre.com.

Twitter: @tarragontheatre

Facebook: /TarragonTheatre

TARRAGON THEATRE

For media inquiries please contact:

Danielle Morgan

daniellemorganpr@gmail.com | 416.904.8046