

Young Playwrights Unit



Staged Reading Series
Programme

Saturday June 1st and Sunday June 2nd, 2019

Tarragon Theatre Workspace

TARRAGON EDUCATION

Program Description

Inspired by new play development practices at Tarragon, the Young Playwrights Unit (YPU) is a free training experience for young people who are curious and passionate about play-making. Each year, the program provides a group of dedicated young writers the rigorous context in which to develop some of their first works. After six months of development, our 2019 YPU is ready to present their work here at Tarragon, with the support of our generous team of directors and actors.

Anne Wessels (Producer, Director of Education)

As Tarragon's Director of Education, Anne has had the huge pleasure of working with Caitie Graham and Paula Wing and many young playwrights over these last four years. For her, seeing emerging playwrights flourish in the staged readings of the Young Playwrights Unit marks one of the highlights of the Tarragon season. She sends deep thanks to Caitie and Paula for their wisdom and artistry and to all the participants including this ensemble of fine actors for their dedication.



Program Directors

Caitie Graham (Co-Director)

Caitie is a playwright, dramaturg, and arts educator in Toronto. She is currently Co-Director of the Young Playwrights Unit at Tarragon Theatre, where her first play was developed in 2013, and where she continues to support and mentor young artists. Select writing credits include *Paradise Comics* (originally presented as part of the 2014 New Voices Festival, then remounted in 2016 for Filament Incubator's inaugural season); *pose ball* (Alumnae Theatre's 2016 New Ideas Festival, and Tarragon Theatre's Live Wires Series 2016); and *GASH* (Alumnae Theatre's 2017 Fireworks Festival, Ergo Pink Festival 2019). She is a running-up recipient of the 2018 Ellen Ross Stuart Award.



Paula Wing (Co-Director)

Paula Wing is a writer, teacher, actor and translator. Her work has been produced across Canada, most recently in Toronto at Young Peoples Theatre, where her play *RISKY PHIL* premiered in 2018. Her translation of Stefano Massini's *INTRACTABLE WOMAN* had its U.S. premiere with PlayCo in New York City in 2018 and will be performed at Berkeley Rep in June 2019. Paula is a Resident Artist at Souleppper Theatre Company, and she has taught the Young Playwrights Unit at the Tarragon for more than 10 years.



The Plays

BOOM!

Saturday June 1st @ 2:00pm, Tarragon Workspace

Playwright: Magda Uculmana-Falcon

Director: Lisa Karen Cox

Cast: Meghan Aguirre, Rosina Ferede, Alyssa Pothier, and Brianna Wright

A physical altercation in a classroom, between a teacher and a black, female student, goes viral. Friends of the student involved seek justice on her behalf, but then BOOM! Another incident at the school grabs the world's attention, and thwarts their pursuit. *BOOM!* is a play about three black, teenage girls, trying to be heard in an institution that won't listen.

Sol

Saturday June 1st @ 8:00pm, Tarragon Workspace

Playwright: Araceli Ferrara

Director: Rosa Labordé

Cast: Katarina Fiallos, Kathy Martinez, Adriana Moraes-Mendoza, Walter Moraes-Mendoza, Xanath Fuentes Natanson, and Dre Rivas

Sol follows the story of a woman trying to rebuild the past. Set in her memory, *Sol* revisits her fourteen-year-old self during the 1973 coup d'état in Chile, when political tensions threatened the fragile bonds of family. *Sol* is an exploration of memory and the things we do in order to survive.

The Plays

You Better Second Line!

Sunday June 2nd @ 2:00pm, Tarragon Workspace

Playwright: JD Leslie

Director: Audrey Dwyer

Cast: Meghan Aguirre, Walter Moraes-Mendoza, and Pablo Ogunlesi

Welcome to New Orleans! Where death is a celebration and crickets play jazz music to keep souls at rest. Brave and his cricket family welcome you with open arms to the graveyard as tonight is moon's day; the one time of the month when souls can pass onto the other side. But what happens when a soul can't be put to rest? What happens when you aren't ready to move on? And what happens if there ain't no moon? One thing's for sure...you better second line!

3 Sisters

Sunday June 2nd @ 8:00pm, Tarragon Workspace

Playwright: Thom Nyhuus

Director: Madeleine Jullian

Cast: Alex Cameron, Victoria Carella, Ellie Ellwand, Madelaine Hodges, Daniel Reale, Lizzie Song, Brianna Wright, John Wamsley, and Sean Williams

As their youngest sister Irina prepares to audition for the prestigious ballet company their father once led, the Prozorov children must grapple with the financial and emotional wreckage their disgraced patriarch left behind. Told over a turbulent summer in cottage country, this reimagining of Chekhov's classic play examines legacy, gender dynamics in a shifting world, and what it means to live a life that matters.

Playwrights



Araceli Ferrara (Playwright, *So!*)

Araceli Ferrara is an aspiring playwright and dramaturg. She is currently pursuing a Bachelor of Arts in Theatre, specializing in dramaturgy and devised theatre, with a minor in history from York University. Her passion for theatre began at a young age, where she received training in acting, singing, and dancing. In recent years, she has embraced her dreams to be a writer and will continue to develop plays in the future, with the hopes of seeing her work produced one day.

JD Leslie (Playwright, *You Better Second Line!*)

JD is delighted to experience her playwriting debut at the Tarragon and with the extremely talented artists of the YPU. A recent graduate of the University of Windsor's BFA Program, she has developed a background for devised and physical theatre. Upon graduation, she has worked as a workshop actress for the Tarragon's Young Playwright Unit, the Paprika Festival's Playwrights-in-Residence and Obsidian's Playwright's Unit. She now continues her training at the Factory theatre with the 2018/2019's Factory Mechanicals. She would like to thank Paula Wing, Caitie, and the members of the YPU for their endless support and artistry. Just being in the room with you all is inspiring. Thank you!



Thom Nyhuus (Playwright, *3 Sisters*)

Thom is an actor and writer from Ottawa, Ontario. He is a graduate of George Brown Theatre School and the artistic director of Scrap Paper Theatre, a company committed to the creation of new work with a contemporary voice. His first play, *Cannibal*, premiered in January 2019 at Next Stage. He would like to thank the Tarragon for this program; Magda, Araceli, JD, Caitie, Paula, and Madeleine for their work on this play; these generous actors for giving these characters their voices; and the village of Sturgeon Point, for giving these characters a home.



Magda Uculmana-Falcon (Playwright, *BOOM!*)

Magda Uculmana-Falcon is an Afro-Latinx theatre artist with Peruvian and Nigerian heritage. She has just completed her first year of acting at the National Theatre School of Canada. Her most recent credits include: *Black Girl in Search of God*, a short film that she wrote, directed and starred in which premiered at the 2019 TIFF Next Wave Festival's Battle of the Scores. Additionally, she was a member of Factory Theatre's The Foundry (2018) where she wrote her first full length play, *Mamacha del Carmen*. Thank you Paula, Caitie, and Lisa for being a guiding force through this process.



Directors



Lisa Karen Cox (Director, *BOOM!*)

A graduate of Concordia University's Interdisciplinary Studies program, Lisa Karen Cox relishes work that combines music, movement and heightened language. Lisa was the choreographer for Nightwood Theatre's *Bear with Me* and *Comedy of Errors*, Assistant Director for *We Are Proud to Present a Presentation about the Herero of Namibia...* (Theatre Centre), *Salt-Water Moon* (Factory Theatre), *The Adventures of the Black Girl in Her Search for God*, Intimacy Consultant for *In the Next Room* (RedWit Theatre) the Associate Director for Why Not Theatre's Toronto productions of *Like Mother, Like Daughter*.

Audrey Dwyer (Director, *You Better Second Line!*)

Audrey Dwyer is a multi-disciplinary artist with over twenty years of experience. She directed *Calpurnia* (Nightwood Theatre/Sulong Theatre). She was nominated for Outstanding Direction for *The Apology*. She was the Associate Artistic Director of Nightwood Theatre (2008-2009). She won the Cayle Chernin Award for Theatre (2015). She was the Artistic Director of Cow Over Moon Theatre from 2016-2017. She is the Urjo Kareeda Resident at the Tarragon (2018/2019) and is the Tarragon's Assistant Artistic Director. She graduated from The National Theatre School. Upcoming: *Prairie Nurse*, Lighthouse Theatre.



Madeleine Jullian (Director, *3 Sisters*)

Madeleine has worked as an actor, director, and video editor in Berlin, London, and Toronto. She directed Caitie Graham's *GASH* for the 2017 FireWorks Festival at Alumnae Theatre, and in 2015, she produced a double bill of Sheldon Rosen's one-act plays, *New Order* and *The Grand Hysterical*, at Ryerson University's Abrams Theatre. In 2013 she produced and directed *The Nature of a Bullet* as part of the Toronto Fringe. Other directing credits include *Paradise Comics* (2014), *Positive I.D* (2013), and *Just to See You Smile* (2012).



Rosa Labordé (Director, *Sol*)

Rosa's plays have been produced across Canada as well as at Playwright's Horizons and the Arthur Seelen Theatre in New York City. She has been a finalist for the Governor General's Literary Award for Drama, the Dora Mavor Moore Award, and received the KM Hunter Artist's Award for Theatre. Currently she is Playwright in Residence with Tarragon Theatre and has commissions for Tarragon Theatre and The Stratford Festival of Canada. She is a graduate of The Oxford School of Drama in England and The Canadian Film Centre's Primetime Television Writing Program.



Actors



Meghan Aguirre (Tamara, *BOOM!*; Brave, *You Better Second Line!*)

Meghan Aguirre is, above all, an extraterrestrial. Masquerading as a student of “New Media” (obviously fake) at Ryerson University, she’s been embarking on a mission for “research” purposes. You might’ve seen her in *A Perfect Bowl of Pho*, as human as any 8-year-old rapping sensation. Or perhaps you caught a look at *Queen*, where she researched an impassioned bee scientist. She’s a curious one, that Meghan. Perhaps one day, we can all look past the mucus-secreting skin and bulging eyes, and convince ourselves she’s human. But I’ll leave the verdict to you. Enjoy the show!

Alex Cameron (Nick, *3 Sisters*)

Alex Cameron is a current Theatre and Performance Studies major at U of T Mississauga. Having performed on stage in local improv competitions and university productions, he made his Toronto stage debut last year at the Fringe. Beginning in September, he will serve as Artistic Director for the English and Drama Student Society at UTM.



Victoria Carella (Natasha, *3 Sisters*)

Victoria Carella is entering her fourth year of at York University, studying Performance Creation and Research with a specialization in Devised Theatre. She is happy to be involved in the development of a reimagining of one of her favourite plays. Recent credits include the creation and performance of *Brenda’s Big Number* and *What You Egg*. She also performed as Princess Sharon in *A Friend of Dorothy* for York’s Playground Festival in 2019.



Ellie Ellwand (Masha, *3 Sisters*)

Ellie Ellwand is a graduate of NTS. Selected credits include *What I Call Her* (Crow’s Theatre), Vic in *Enormity*, *Girl and the Earthquake in her Lungs* (new play workshop/ Nightwood Theatre), Cordelia in *King Lear @ the Baseball Diamond* (Shakespeare in the Ruff/ House + Body workshop production), *The Queen’s Eulogy* (T.O. Fringe), *Girl in The Nails* (Summerworks), *Romeo + Juliet* (Lost and Gone). For NTS: *These Peaceable Kingdoms*, *Exit the King*, *The Laramie Project*, *Much Ado*, *King Lear*. Upcoming: workshop production of an adaptation of *Edward II* at Soulpepper. follow @ellieellwand for fun and being friends



Actors



Rosina Bethlehem Ferede (Felicia, *BOOM!*)

Rosina Bethlehem Ferede is an actress-singer-dancer of Ethiopian origin based in Toronto. She studied playwriting at York University and Theatre Performance at Humber College, where she won the Humber Achievement award her first year. Her most recent works include *The Infinity Machine* at The Theatre Centre by way of Humber and a workshop of *You Know My Name Not My Story*. Rosina is very excited to be a part of YPU this year and would like to thank her friends and family for all their continued love and support.

Katarina Fiallos (Sol, *Sol*)

Katarina Fiallos began her journey as an actor by attending her local arts high school in Ottawa and graduated with honours. She has had the opportunity to perform in numerous productions that range from musicals to Shakespeare to experimental works. Most recent credits include: *Start Swimming, Not About Nightingales, Blackout, The Drowsy Chaperone, and Love & Information*. In addition, Katarina is a trained singer and recently qualified as a provincial finalist in a Canadian music competition. Last year, Katarina was accepted into Ryerson University's conservatory acting program at the School of Performance and is currently completing her four-year training program.



Madelaine Hodges 賀美倫 (Irina, *3 Sisters*)

Madelaine is a Chinese-Canadian actor, dancer, choreographer, and singer from Scarborough, ON. This fall she will be entering her 4th year at Ryerson's School of Performance's Acting Program. Some of her favourite RSP credits include: Eliza Doolittle in Shaw's *Pygmalion*, and Rosaline in Shakespeare's *Love's Labour's Lost*. Other credits include: Verges/Ursula in Panoply Classical Collective's *Much Ado About Nothing*, and Kathy (lead) in Edge of the Sky's *Summerland: The Musical* (Toronto Fringe). Upcoming credits include: Tybalt in Panoply's *Romeo and Juliet*, and Gwen in Mixtape Projects' *Mixtape* (remount). She is eager to begin her professional career in the upcoming year.



Kathy Martinez (Mari, *Sol*)

Kathy Martinez is a playwright and actress. Her theatrical career began in high school, where Martinez acted in and wrote plays for the NTS Drama Festival, formerly known as the Sears Ontario Drama Festival. Her first play, "O Nosso Fado", moved into the regional level of the festival and was selected to be a part of the 2017 Summerworks Performance Festival. In 2018, Martinez co-wrote and performed in a show called "Play Rights" that moved onto the provincial showcase of the festival. Currently, she is a playwright in residence for the Paprika Festival, where her play "Uncharted" will be debuted.



Actors



Adriana Moraes-Mendoza (Barbara, *So!*)

Adriana is a latinx, multidisciplinary artist, born and raised in Toronto. She is passionate about storytelling, especially through movement, writing and devised theatre. Recent productions include: *Blood + Soil* (DIR: ROUVAN SILOGIX), *Guadalupe* (DIR: ANDREA VILLANUEVA), *F*cking Perfect* (Chocolatekiss Collective, BEST OF FRINGE). She is currently a part of Factory Theatre's The Foundry, Emerging Playwright's Unit. Adriana was on the writing team for Smoothieland Performance Projects' first production of *It's Not About Kenny* (DIR: MARIE BEATH BADIAN). Adriana is the co-founder of ConQueso Collective, premiering their first piece, *DiablaDivina* as part of Aluna Theatre's 2019 Camino's Festival this fall.

Walter Moraes-Mendoza (Oscar, *So!*; Willy, *You Better Second Line!*)

Walter Moraes-Mendoza is a latinx multidisciplinary artist based, born, and raised in Toronto. He is passionate about devised work, physical theatre, and clown. Walter's recent theatre credits include, "The Sycorax Brood" Dir. Varrick Grimes, "High Point Fields" Dir. Herbie Barnes, and "U.R.U" Dir. Marie Beath Badian. He has trained in Acting, Devised work, and Writing at Eclat School of Performing Arts. Walter performed and co-wrote the SummerWorks show "Nize It", a devised collective creation showcased at Factory Theatre. Walter is the recipient of the Brian Moniez Award and Scholarship, and the Catherine Marion Award and Scholarship for Academic Excellence at Humber Theatre Performance.



Xanath Fuentes Natanson (Michelle, *So!*)

Xanath Fuentes Natanson is a recent graduate of The University of Windsor's BFA Acting program. She is so grateful for the opportunity to read the beautiful words of Araceli Ferrara. Past work includes *Sweet Girl Shrapnel* (Toronto Fringe Festival 2018), *How Words Fly Like Fish* (Dark Crop Festival 2018), *Eurydice*, Pazzo Theatre Collective. Future projects include *The Wolf at Our Door* (InspiraTO Festival).



Pablo Ogunlesi (Rev. Raven, *You Better Second Line!*)

Pablo Ogunlesi is a Nigerian-Canadian actor, playwright and alumni of the Ryerson School of Performance Acting program. Pablo lived in Nigeria and studied in Switzerland before he migrated to Canada, where he discovered his passion for performing. Pablo recently wrote, produced and acted in *Black President*, a cultural and political play about Nigeria, which debuted in the Ryerson New Voices Festival. Ryerson works: *This Is How We Live*, Ensemble (2019); *The Odyssey* (2018); *The Women, Pedicurist*, 1st Saleswoman, Maggie, 2nd Cutie (2018); *The Seventh Seal*, Jonas Skat (2017); *Orpheus Descending*, Valentine Xavier (2017); *Julius Caesar*, Metellus Cimber, Messala (2016); *Seminar*, Martin, (2016)



Actors



Alyssa Pothier (Principal Kelly, *BOOM!*)

Alyssa is a recent graduate of Ryerson School of Performance, and is thrilled to be a part of this workshop! Upcoming works include: *Macbeth: More than Man* at the Parodos festival; *Deep End* at the Toronto Fringe Festival; and *Romeo and Juliet* with Panoply Classical Collective.

Daniel Reale (Alexander, *3 Sisters*)

Daniel is an actor and singer born and raised in Caledon East, Ontario, and a recent graduate of George Brown Theatre School. Apart from acting Daniel has found a passion in Directing, and for the past four years has been an Academy Director for Theatre Orangeville's Young Company. Selected theatre credits: *Zach, Boys, Girls and Other Mythological Creatures* and *Schwartz, A Christmas Story* (Theatre Orangeville). George Brown Highlights: *Basil, The Picture of Dorian Gray*, and *Beaumarchais, Monsieur D'Eon is a Woman*. As always he would like to thank his friends and family for their constant support.



Dre Rivas (Marisol, *So!*)

Dre is a 3rd year Devised Theatre student at York University. In previous years, Dre has worked on several projects within York's Theatre department, including: "Miss Bishop Goes to Jail", "Metamorphoses" and "The Corner Cabaret". Additionally, Dre has worked on the short film "Alexandra" with Whales on Mars Productions, and other staged productions such as "The Vagina Monologues" with Vday@York, "Jesus Christ Superstar" with JDP Productions and "Unity (1918)" with Ovation Performing Arts. This is Dre's first workshop with Tarragon and the Young Playwright's Unit, and is thrilled to take part in the development of this incredible new play.



Lizzie Song (Sonya, *3 Sisters*)

Lizzie Song is a recent graduate of the MA Musical Theatre program at the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland and of Randolph College for the Performing Arts. She is grateful for the opportunity to work with YPU and Tarragon Theatre. Her recent credits include: *9 to 5: The Musical* (Lower Ossington Theatre), *Dirty Rotten Scoundrels* and *Legacy: A Mother's Song* (RCS & Edinburgh Fringe Festival), *The Drowsy Chaperone* (Randolph Theatre) and *The Weavers* (Annex Theatre).



Actors



John Wamsley (Andrei, *3 Sisters*)

John Wamsley is a gay Indigenous actor, dancer, and choreographer born and raised in Kitchener, Ontario. He is also a graduate of the Theatre and Drama Studies program at Sheridan College and the University of Toronto. Selected credits include *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Tottering Biped Theatre), *The Importance of Being Earnest* (Theatre Erindale), *Spain* (OPIA Theatre Collective), *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee* (Hart House Theatre) and *Timothy Findley's The Wars* (The Grand Theatre). He is also the co-founder of the Toronto-based theatre company Theatre Born Between. For more: www.johnwamsley.ca

Sean Williams (Sol, *3 Sisters*)

Sean is thrilled to be playing Sol in *3 Sisters*! A graduate from the UWindsor Acting program, Sean's previous roles include Richard Hannay in *The 39 Steps*, Aramis in *The Three Musketeers*, and Constantine in *Big Love* (University Players). Other credits include the Lord of the Underworld in *Eurydice* (Pazzo Theatre Collective), Mercer in *A Line in the Sand* (ATHE Boston) and his award-winning Commedia dell'Arte production entitled *The Steps to Sex-cess*, which premiered at the Windsor-Walkerville Fringe Festival. Sean has also been featured in such films as *For Christ's Sake* playing Sebastian and in *Essence of Death* as Lucifer.



Brianna Wright (Shanelle, *BOOM!*; Olga, *3 Sisters*)

Born and raised in Mississauga, Ontario, Brianna Wright is a Toronto-based actor going into her fourth year of study at the Ryerson School of Performance. Brianna's recent credits include Mrs. Higgins in *Pygmalion* (dir. James Wallis), and the Princess of France in *Love's Labour's Lost* (dir. Ian Watson). Inspired by the brilliant pieces of theatre that she has seen in Toronto, Brianna is excited to workshop developing plays as part of Tarragon's YPU Acting Company this summer.



SPECIAL THANKS

Danielle Bourgon, Joanna Falck, Cam Johnston, Natasha Parsons, Luke Reece, Sophia Fabiili, Aaron Jan, Andrea Scott