

GARGANTUA theatre

30
YEARS

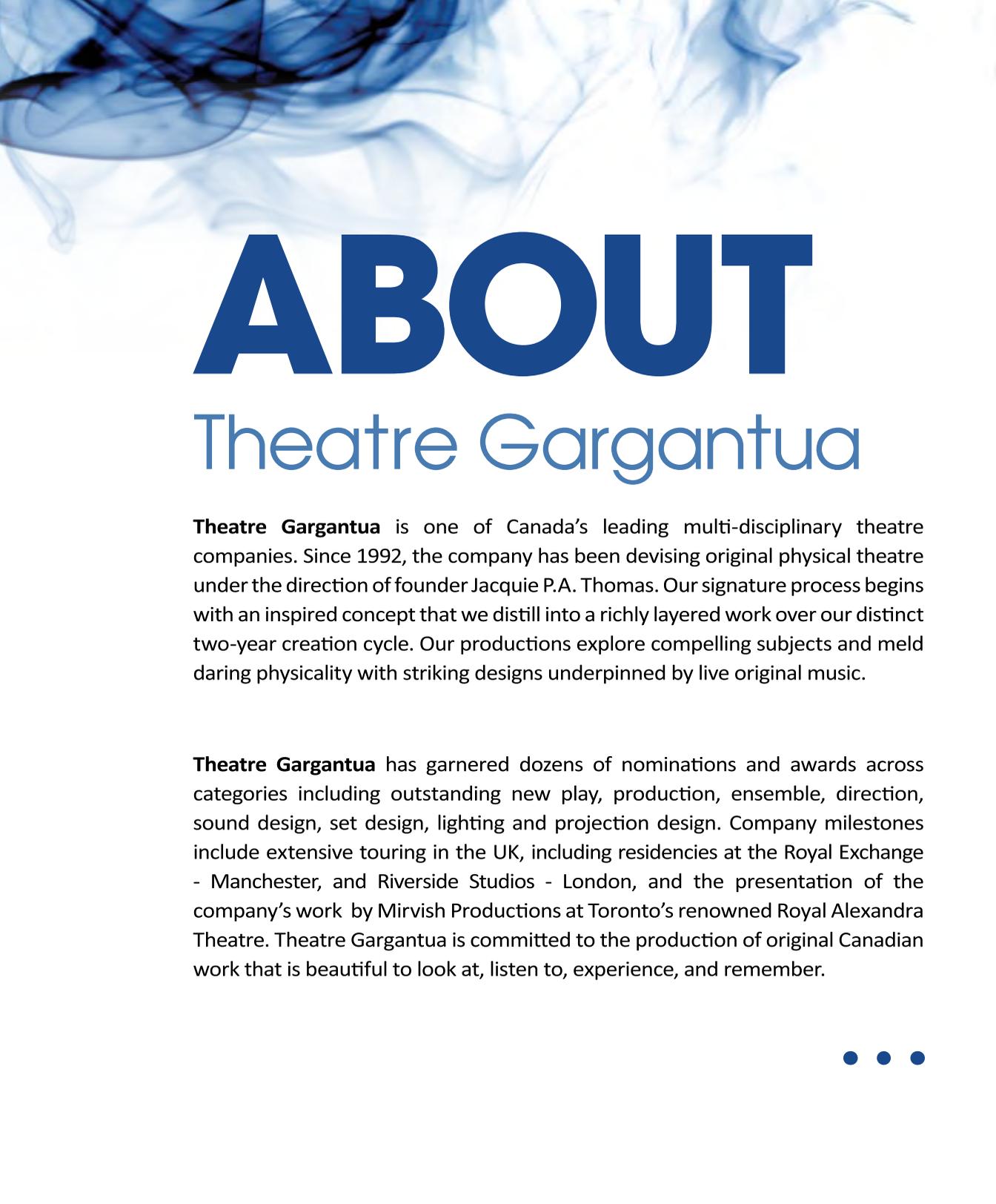
PROGRAMME

30 YEARS OF AWARD-WINNING THEATRE

FALL 2022



WATERFALL



ABOUT

Theatre Gargantua

Theatre Gargantua is one of Canada's leading multi-disciplinary theatre companies. Since 1992, the company has been devising original physical theatre under the direction of founder Jacquie P.A. Thomas. Our signature process begins with an inspired concept that we distill into a richly layered work over our distinct two-year creation cycle. Our productions explore compelling subjects and meld daring physicality with striking designs underpinned by live original music.

Theatre Gargantua has garnered dozens of nominations and awards across categories including outstanding new play, production, ensemble, direction, sound design, set design, lighting and projection design. Company milestones include extensive touring in the UK, including residencies at the Royal Exchange - Manchester, and Riverside Studios - London, and the presentation of the company's work by Mirvish Productions at Toronto's renowned Royal Alexandra Theatre. Theatre Gargantua is committed to the production of original Canadian work that is beautiful to look at, listen to, experience, and remember.



FULL COMPANY

The Ensemble

HEATHER MARIE ANNIS
MUHADDISAH
ANDREW SOUTTER
MICHAEL GORDON SPENCE
TRISHA TELREJA

Creative

Directed by **JACQUIE P.A. THOMAS**
Written by **THE ENSEMBLE**
Costume Design by **OTTILIE MASON**
Lighting & Media Design by **LAIRD MACDONALD**
Sound Design and Music Direction by **HEIDI CHAN**
Original Music Compositions by **HEIDI CHAN**
AND THE ENSEMBLE
Set Design by **MICHAEL GORDON SPENCE**

Stage Manager **SCARLETT LARRY**
Production Manager **HARRI THOMAS**
Artistic Intern **RILEY OUGH**
Artistic Intern **NICCI PRICE**
Production Assistant **MARC CAMACHO**
House Technician **MAKIAH BAUTIS**

For Theatre Gargantua

Artistic Director **JACQUIE P.A. THOMAS**
Associate Artistic Director **MICHAEL GORDON SPENCE**
General Manager **LYNETTE HINES**
Producer **MIKE SCOTT**

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LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Theatre Gargantua and Factory Theatre reside on the traditional territory of the Mississaugas of the Credit, the Anishnaabe, the Chippewa, the Haudenosaunee and the Wendat peoples. The territory is now home to many diverse First Nations, Inuit and Métis Peoples. We also acknowledge Tkaronto is covered by Treaty 13 signed with the Mississaugas of the Credit River and covered by the Dish with One Spoon wampum belt covenant. Though this agreement has been broken, it aims to bind the Indigenous peoples and all settlers to share and protect the land through peace, friendship and respect. We hope that going forward, we can improve on our end of this responsibility.

But we cannot talk about water without acknowledging the history of disproportionate access to clean, usable water in indigenous communities across Canada. Indigenous peoples' access to water has been impacted by government policies, legislation, development, and contamination. Ontario alone contains some of the worst affected communities including Shoal Lake, Grassy Narrows and Neskantaga First Nation. In this piece, we include mention of these affected communities to highlight this crisis, but as a whole this is not our story to tell. WaterFall instead, became a deep dive into our relationship, accountability and connection to water. Through this we recognize and assert deep gratitude for the indigenous teachings and the peoples who have been sharing this message long before us.

To take more actionable steps, Theatre Gargantua has made a donation to Water First and shared resources we found valuable whilst crafting WaterFall. You can scan the QR code below which will take you to a number of links focused on indigenous issues around water, as well as the link to Water First's donation page.

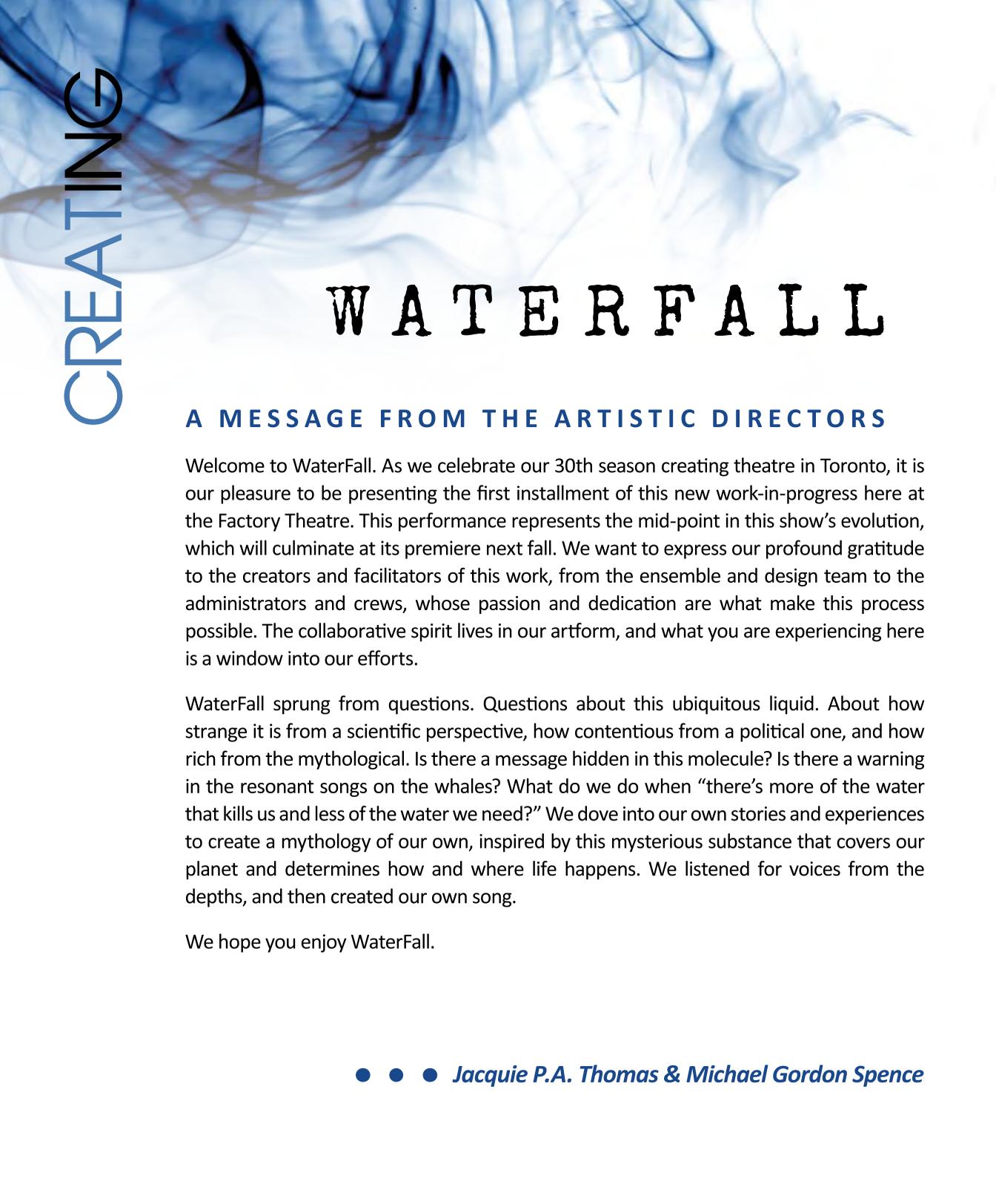
Theatre Gargantua knows a land acknowledgement alone will not make up for the past, but is a promise to listen and connect with the people who continue to care for this land and be a starting point for more actionable steps toward reconciliation.





AS WE CELEBRATE
THEATRE GARGANTUA'S
30TH ANNIVERSARY WE
LOOK BACK AT OUR FIRST
SHOW AND FORWARD TO
THE NEXT 30 YEARS.

Michael Cooper - Cooper Shoots



CREATING

WATERFALL

A MESSAGE FROM THE ARTISTIC DIRECTORS

Welcome to WaterFall. As we celebrate our 30th season creating theatre in Toronto, it is our pleasure to be presenting the first installment of this new work-in-progress here at the Factory Theatre. This performance represents the mid-point in this show's evolution, which will culminate at its premiere next fall. We want to express our profound gratitude to the creators and facilitators of this work, from the ensemble and design team to the administrators and crews, whose passion and dedication are what make this process possible. The collaborative spirit lives in our artform, and what you are experiencing here is a window into our efforts.

WaterFall sprung from questions. Questions about this ubiquitous liquid. About how strange it is from a scientific perspective, how contentious from a political one, and how rich from the mythological. Is there a message hidden in this molecule? Is there a warning in the resonant songs on the whales? What do we do when "there's more of the water that kills us and less of the water we need?" We dove into our own stories and experiences to create a mythology of our own, inspired by this mysterious substance that covers our planet and determines how and where life happens. We listened for voices from the depths, and then created our own song.

We hope you enjoy WaterFall.

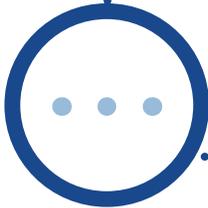
● ● ● *Jacquie P.A. Thomas & Michael Gordon Spence*

Meet the COMPANY



JACQUIE THOMAS DIRECTOR

For Theatre Gargantua: *A Tonic for Desperate Times*, *The Wager*, *Reflector*, *Avaricious*, *The Sacrifice Zone* and *Imprints*, among others. Other selected credits: Ossetynski Actors Lab in Los Angeles, Roy Hart Theatre in France, The National Theatre of Greece and the Gardzienice Theatre Association of Poland. In addition to her role as founder and Artistic Director, Jacquie has served Gargantua as an actor, director, producer, composer, choreographer, dramaturge and writer, earning 12 Dora nominations for her artistic contributions to the company. Jacquie was awarded a Harold Award for contributions to Toronto's independent theatre community and the Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medal in 2013 for contributions to Canadian Culture and Community. In 2019, Jacquie was honoured with the George Luscombe Award for Mentorship in Professional Theatre.



MICHAEL GORDON SPENCE

ASSOCIATE ARTISTIC DIRECTOR,
SET DESIGN, PERFORMER

For Theatre Gargantua: *A Tonic for Desperate Times*, *The Wager*, *Reflector*, *Avaricious*, *The Sacrifice Zone* and *Imprints*, among others. designs for Théâtre français de Toronto, theatrefront, CollabArts, and CCOC. Michael is an award-winning, long-standing member of Theatre Gargantua's creative team. He has been involved in one way or another in all of TG's productions, appearing in all major Cycles, writing or designing for many of the company's noted works, as well as directing the company's first SideStream Cycle. His script for *The Exit Room* was nominated for a Dora Mavor Moore Award for Outstanding New Play, and he has taken home three Doras in each of Outstanding Set Design and Outstanding Music (with the company). Michael is also a recipient of a Harold Award — a distinguished honour for members of the Toronto independent theatre community. He is an avid sailor as well as an accomplished musician and singer-songwriter.



HEATHER MARIE ANNIS

PERFORMER

For Theatre Gargantua: *A Tonic For Desperate Times*, artistic intern for e-DENTITY. Other selected credits: *Orphan Song* (Tarragon Theatre), *Post Alice* (Here for Now Theatre), *Christmas Carol* (SoupCan Theatre), *Remembering The Winnipeg General* (Dora Nominated for Best Ensemble, Zeitpunk Theatre), *Let's Go* (DMT Productions), *The Money Tree* (Dora Nominated for Best Ensemble, Roseneath), *Bright Lights* (Theatre Bruhaha), *Emily's Piano* (YPT), *By A Thread* (Sterling Studio Theatre), and the Morro and Jasp series including: *Morro and Jasp: 9-5* (Factory Theatre), *Morro and Jasp: Go Bake Yourself* (Dora Winner).

Heather is an actor, director, playwright, educator, theatrical and therapeutic clown, co-artistic director of U.N.I.T. Productions, and "Morro" of the Dora and Canadian Comedy Award winning clown duo, Morro and Jasp. You can currently see her in the web series, *The Supers*, *The Stoners* and *The Big Bad*.

Heather sends a heartfelt thank you to the Gargantua team for having her aboard this fantastic project, the whole cast and crew for their love, spirit and creativity; and the ever supportive Alastair and Valkyrie. Follow @corginfluencer for cute puppy pics.



MUHADDISAH

PERFORMER

Muhaddisah has worked with the Thousand Islands Playhouse, Guild Festival Theatre (Dora nomination), Buddies in Bad Times Theatre, Davis Shakespeare Festival, Shakespeare in Action, Tottering Biped Theatre, Dark Day Monday, Assembly Theatre, Theatre Erindale, Theatre Oculus, and now, Theatre Gargantua. Currently, she can be seen as Aruna on DREAM JOB (ECG satellite network) and in 2023 her work as the on-set acting coach in I WOKE UP A VAMPIRE (Netflix USA) will premiere. In January she is assistant directing Alan Dilworth in Theatre Erindale's production of Roger Beck's ALCESTIS, of which she directed the world premiere. Earlier this year she launched her debut poetry collection "limbs and whims" which can be found wherever books are sold. Muhaddisah would like to share her gratitude: to mom, papa, bhai, and Shanzé; to Rose; to JGR for the continued mentorship; and to the entire Gargantua team for embracing her — in all senses of the word.

ANDREW SOUTER

PERFORMER

Originally from Kingston Ontario, Andrew is a multidisciplinary performing artist and graduate of Sheridan College and the University of Toronto Mississauga's joint Theatre and Drama Studies acting program. Past Toronto credits include Bert - Mary Poppins, Mushnik - Little Shop, Princeton/Rod - Avenue Q, Moritz - Spring Awakening, Lord Farquaad - SHREK, Angel - RENT, Patsy - Spamalot (The LOT); Nick Piazza - Fame, Professor Bhaer - Little Women (Firstact); as well as Bobby Strong - Urinetown (Stageworks). Credits from Kingston and the surrounding area include Enjolras - Les Miserables, Kurt Von Trapp - Sound of Music, Baby John - West Side Story (Grand Theatre); and Oliver - Oliver! (Thousand Islands Playhouse). Other regional credits include Buddy Holly - We Will Rock You, Tunny - American Idiot and Barfee - Spelling Bee (Stephenville Theatre Festival). Andrew wishes to thank Jacquie and Michael for this incredible opportunity as well as the fearless ensemble for their relentless creativity. Big Hugs to friends and family for their continued love and support. *Paciencia y fe.*



TRISHA TALREJA

PERFORMER

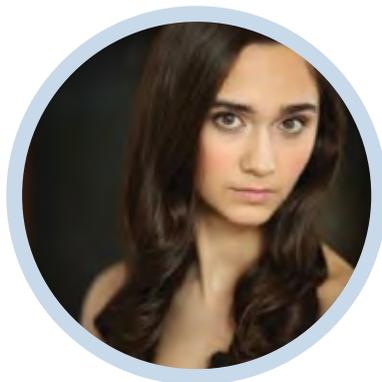
Theatre Gargantua debut. Selected theatre credits: The Secret Garden (Theatre Calgary), Seeking Refuge (Thick and Thin Theatre), Wizard of Oz (LOT), A Glass Hive, Secrets of Area 51, A Chorus Line, Anne of Green Gables, Urinetown. Trisha is a musical theatre performer and classical vocalist. Throughout her youth, she trained extensively in voice, piano, and various dance styles and was the lead singer for the Etobicoke Jazz band. She later attended Etobicoke School of the Arts' musical theatre program, where she was the recipient of the Etobicoke Musical Productions Scholarship. In 2022, she was selected as a Quarterfinalist in the American Traditions Vocal Competition. She is a graduate of Randolph College for the Performing Arts' Triple Threat training program. Trisha would like to express her gratitude to Theatre Gargantua for this amazing opportunity! She would also like to thank her family, friends, and mentors for their love and encouragement!

www.trishatalreja.com

SCARLETT LARRY

STAGE MANAGER

Theatre Gargantua Debut. Scarlett is a multidisciplinary theatre artist who has worked on stages across Turtle Island and internationally. Selected Theatre Credits: 4 seasons at the Stratford Festival split between Stage Management and Lighting Design, Stage Manager and Associate Lighting Designer of Kiviug Returns: An Inuit Epic (National Theatre of Greenland, Qaggiavuut!, Tarragon Theatre), Apprentice Stage Manager of Julius Caesar (Crow's, Groundling Theatre), Writer/Director/Producer of The Stage Manager's Guide to Dating Assholes (Edinburgh Fringe, Toronto Fringe). Education: BFA in Theatre Production and Design, MA in Art History, both from York University.



LAIRD MACDONALD

LIGHTING AND PROJECTION DESIGN

For Theatre Gargantua: *A Tonic for Desperate Times*, *The Wager*, *Reflector*, *Avaricious*, *The Sacrifice Zone*, *Imprints*. Laird is a bilingual Montreal-born, lighting and set designer, technical director and production manager with more than 25 years of experience in the profession. His work spans design for theatre, dance, fine and performance art, installations, film & video, music, events and opera. Laird began his career in sculpture and photography, and then trained in film and video at the Emily Carr College of Art & Design, in Vancouver. He has been nominated several times for Dora Mavor Moore Awards in Toronto for his lighting design, including Theatre Gargantua's *The Sacrifice Zone* and won a Dora Award for his work on *A Tonic for Desperate Times*. He has been a designer, or technical director, on many Dora-winning and nominated productions, and continues to enjoy working on productions in both French and English.



OTILIE MASON

COSTUME DESIGN

Otilie is happy to return to work with Theatre Gargantua's amazing team. Past work with the company includes *The Trials* and *Raging Dreams* which garnered her 4 Dora nominations for set and lighting design. She is a multi-disciplinary artist, designer, and performer whose work includes painting, drawing, murals, scenic painting, sculpture, assemblage, site-specific installation, performance, tableaux vivants, cabaret, set design, set-pieces, prop-designing/building/styling, costume design for theatre, film and video, wearable art, print design, interiors and teaching. Recent endeavours are starting a prop rental business, and exhibitions: *Elemental* (April 2017, TO), *Plastic is Beautiful*, Eclectic Electrics Festival (August 2016, Meaford), and *Obvious-Oblivious* (February 2015, Miami). Featured works available at www.penumbra.ink



"I have been swimming in the water of northern Ontario all my life. It feels like crystal velvet. It is healing and sublime".

HEIDI CHAN

SOUND DESIGN & MUSIC DIRECTION

Heidi Chan is excited to work with Theatre Gargantua for the first time! Recent theatre credits: *Trojan Girls and the Outhouse of Atreus* (Outside the March, Factory), *The Tempest* (Company of Fools), *Iphigenia and the Furies* (On Taurian Land) (Sagacillectif, TPM, Architect). Heidi has also designed/composed for Blyth Festival and Red Beti Theatre among others, and has worked internationally as a live multi-instrumentalist for Shakespeare's Globe (UK) and Tang Shu-wing Theatre Studio (Hong Kong). Heidi performs music with bamboo flutes and synthesizers, and currently teaches audio production and East Asian music courses at Toronto Metropolitan University.



LYNETTE HINES

GENERAL MANAGER

Lynette is thrilled to be a part of Theatre Gargantua, after over 10-years of managing several arts non-profits in a finance and governance capacity. Formally of the corporate world, with expertise in process design and enabling governance, being part of an innovative professional company – Gargantua! – is ideal. Lynette holds an MBA in General Management from the Ivey School of Business, and is excited to combine her education, skills, and experience in this new venture. Personally, Lynette has enjoyed performing in dozens of amateur musicals and plays, as well as ongoing singing about town with her husband, David.

MIKE SCOTT

PRODUCER

Mike has recently made the transition from software development to working in theatre full time. His experiences leading a quality assurance team and a period serving on the Board of Directors at The Musical Stage company have come together in his new role at Theatre Gargantua.



HARRI THOMAS

PRODUCTION MANAGER

For Gargantua: Artistic Intern (*A Tonic For Desperate Times*), Creator/Director (*She Was A Gardener, Urban ARteries*)

Harri Thomas is a director, dramaturg, and performance maker based between rural and urban Ontario. A founding member of Other Hearts Collective, their previous works as a director have included adaptations of classic texts, as well as world play premieres and live art creations. Their work emphasizes the body as the site of both trauma and forgiveness, in relationship to love, the earth, the spirit and society. They are a graduate of the National Theatre School of Canada's directing program. Recent Credits: Director/Dramaturg *Slaughter Bros. Dime Circus* (Baby Monster Productions, 2022), Director/Performer *Intangible Adorations Caravan* (Artworx TO, 2022) Director/Dramaturg *One Night* (Other HeArts, Caminos 2019), Creator/Performer *Flower Machine v2: Paiseu* (Other HeArts, York Lane Art Collective 2019), Director/Dramaturg *MAD ONES* (Tangled Art + Disability, 2018).



RILEY OUGH

ARTISTIC INTERN

Selected credits: Performer/creator in *The Floor is Lava* (funded by the Ontario Arts Council), *The Awakening of Spring* (Randolph College), *The Lost Museum* (In Situ Festival), creator of *Queering Classics* (Fempocalypse Festival). Riley is a queer emerging artist specializing in devised and interdisciplinary theatre. During their studies at Randolph College for the Performing Arts, Riley's practice transitioned from musical theatre to physical training, collective creation and dramaturgy. Since Graduating, Riley primarily works as a founding member of Big Kablammo Collective, a group of gender-queer artists generating interdisciplinary, immersive performance through game, play and just the right amount of silliness. Riley is also currently part of the Nightwood Innovators Program. In their work, Riley aims to challenge the confines of traditional western theatre in both form and content and confront the perpetual intersection of gender and performance. Riley began their work with Theatre Gargantua in 2021 during the Emerging Artists Roundtable and is so thrilled to now be involved in their unique process and this exciting piece!

NICCI PRYCE

ARTISTIC INTERN

Selected Credits: Director/Mentor *Queer Youth Cabaret* (Soulpepper, 2022), Writer/Performer *Djinn of the Lamp* (Bad Hats' New Bad Ideas Workshop, 2022), Writer/Performer/Director *Intergalactic Rhymes of 2099* (Soulpepper, 2021), Director *Bex Likes Frogs* (Wednesday Pictures, 2021), Writer/Performer/Director *Crack in the Concrete: Mixtape* (G'RILLA, 2021). Nicci Pryce (they/them) is a queer Jamaican-Canadian artist who creates work as a writer, director, lyricist, and educator. Their artistic practice unifies passion, vulnerability, and social justice. As co-artistic director of G'RILLA Productions, they infuse these values into every project. Relentlessly ambitious, Nicci co-founded G'RILLA while in their first year of Media Production at Toronto Metropolitan University. They would like to thank the graciousness of companies like Theatre Gargantua, Bad Hats, Crane Creations, and Ergo Arts for providing mentorship and additional training while they establish themselves. They would also like to thank their partner Jared for providing an endless well of joy and support.



MARC CAMACHO

PRODUCTION ASSISTANT

For Theatre Gargantua: *WaterFall*. Making his theatre debut, Marc mainly has his focus set on lighting design, stage management and voice over. He has received an IB Certificate for Theatre in 2017 from St. Mary's Catholic Academy. Marc would like to thank the ensemble and Theatre Gargantua crew for truly making every day in rehearsal a delight.



Theatre Gargantua would like to thank

Supporters & Special Thanks:

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Jessica Stinson
Harold Tausch
George & Gayle Thomas
Peter & Lois Turk
Aria Umezawa
Caroline Watling
Gail Baker in honour of Carol
Strom, Kelly Diamond
Claire Nesbitt-Hawed
in honour of Dali Robert Sahukar
Jennifer Prosser
in honour of Eliza Griffin

Opportunities for **ARTISTS**

Theatre Gargantua offers training programs and mentorship for professional and emerging artists throughout the year.

OAC RECOMMENDERS GRANTS FOR THEATRE CREATORS

Theatre Gargantua is proud to participate in the Ontario Arts Council recommender Grants for Theatre Creators Program. This program allows us to assist artists working on multidisciplinary performance projects. We recommend projects focused on devised, original contemporary works of multi-disciplinary theatre, physical theatre and/or new processes of theatre creation.

EMERGING ARTISTS ROUNDTABLE

Recent theatre graduates and final year students are invited to join a forum exploring creating and sustaining a career in theatre. Participants engage with peers, guest artists and our core staff over the course of the series and are provided with tickets for shows and workshop discounts.

ARTISTIC AND PRODUCING MENTORSHIP PROGRAM

Each season we provide opportunities for emerging artists with meaningful, career-building work opportunities on the creation and production of our works, with mentorship from our core team.

DYNAMIC CREATION WORKSHOPS AND MASTER CLASS

These annual programs are designed to empower artists with techniques for developing original performance. Artists explore text, movement and music in an ensemble-like environment based on our acclaimed method of creating multi-disciplinary theatre.

EDUCATION AND YOUTH

HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT MATINEE SERIES

Our student matinee program includes talk-backs with the artists after each performance, a comprehensive study guide, and opportunities for workshops at the theatre or in the classroom.

DYNAMIC CREATION WORKSHOPS FOR YOUTH AND RISK YOUTH PROGRAM

In-school workshops that provide physical training, vocal training and text exploration to youth and encourage them to explore new modes of performance to express their creativity. The Resources Skills Innovation & Knowledge Youth Program combines our in-school workshops with technology in a unique way, engaging students from across the GTA in underserved neighbourhoods.

HELP SUPPORT

Dynamic, Original Theatre

Theatre Gargantua has been at the forefront of multi-disciplinary theatre in Toronto for the past 30 years. Our signature work has garnered over 30 Dora Awards and nominations, toured nationally and internationally, and every year inspires new generations of artists and audiences to engage with contemporary theatre through our outreach programs and performances. Your contribution helps create and develop this original work and continue to bring unique programs to your community.



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THEATREGARGANTUA.CA

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