

For Immediate Release

YOUNG PEOPLE'S THEATRE ANNOUNCES

A VIRTUAL 2020.21 SEASON

Connecting with Young Audiences – *everywhere!*

Toronto, October 8, 2020 – [Young People's Theatre \(YPT\)](#) today announced the fall line-up for its 2020.21 season, the 55th for Canada's oldest and largest theatre for young people. Exclusively online, the fall will feature drama programs designed to connect with young audiences *virtually everywhere*. With fresh initiatives and brand new live-stream facilities, YPT will deliver theatre experiences directly to young people at home, at school and in the community, along with resources to support parents and teachers as they navigate this virtual world.

"These extraordinary times have inspired YPT to create new ways to engage within digital spaces, to stay connected to the young people, families and educators we serve," says YPT **Artistic Director Allen MacInnis**. "In a world that's changing so rapidly, we've decided to announce fall programming only at this time, all of which will take place safely online."

New programming includes:

- **Storytelling Series** featuring Indigenous and non-European traditions
- Fall edition of YPT's Playwriting Festival ***Right Here, Write Now***
- An Indigenous series that traces the **Thirteen Moons of the Anishinaabek** calendar
- Virtual **artist residencies** and **customized workshops** for schools and community organizations
- YPT's **drama classes**, inspired by the success of this summer's online drama camps, launch virtually Oct. 13.

Additionally, YPT is excited to announce:

- Its historic theatre has been adapted with new **streaming studios** that are now available to the community
- And YPT now has home delivery with its new **Play in a Box**, specially created for family fun this holiday season!

Although these times of physical distancing have removed us from our audiences, not being constrained by "place" offers a unique opportunity to get even closer. With online programming, YPT will continue to address many of the traditional barriers to access – distance, culture, and resources – to create meaningful connections with families, schools and artists everywhere.

"I don't want any of us to get used to not gathering in the same space together to share a theatrical story," says Mr. MacInnis. "But I caution that we not wish for things to just go back to the way they were before. That would mean we profoundly failed to learn anything from this time. I truly hope that, instead, we restore the best things – and fix the other things that have been shown to be so broken, including those that prevent social, racial and economic equality, as well as those things that use up the resources of our planet beyond its capacity to continue sustaining us. We can do better."

YPT FOR FAMILIES

RIGHT HERE, WRITE NOW – Fall Festival

Right Here, Write Now, a new play festival introduced in June, returns with its latest series of live-streamed readings, featuring contemporary playwrights responding to these extraordinary times. The series includes playwright/actor **Jeff Ho** (YPT's *Antigone*: 方; Ophelia in *Why Not's Prince Hamlet*); Icelandic playwright/author **Andri Snær Magnason** (YPT's *Blue Planet*); and playwright/actor **Makambe K Simamba** (*Our Fathers, Sons, Lovers and Little Brothers*, b current performing arts; Artist in Residence, Tarragon). The Festival takes place Dec. 7, 8 & 11 at 7PM.

A recorded version will be made available to schools with optional pre- and post-show workshops.

STORYTELLER SERIES

Premiering in October, this brand new video series spotlights oral storytelling traditions across cultures. The series launches with the first of four storytellers, Anishinaabemowin educator **Barbara Nolan**. Barbara helped create one of the first NSL (Native as a Second Language) programs in Ontario. Her recorded stories, told over three days on Oct. 14, 21 and 28, will be presented in Ojibway with English subtitles.

Storyteller and playwright **Gail Nyoka** brings her stories to the virtual stage Nov. 25, Dec. 2 and 9. In 2018, Gail travelled to Ghana where she recorded tales of the Ewe people, *Voices of the Ancestors: Stories and Lore from Ghana's Volta*. **Louise Profeit-LeBlanc** and **Pamela Mordecai** will also be featured later in the series.

The Storyteller Series will be made available to schools with optional pre- and post-show workshops.

INDIGENizeUS – Following the Moons

YPT's *INDIGENizeUS* program, created by **Lindy Kinoshameg**, Community Engagement Facilitator at YPT, launches a monthly video series that follows the Thirteen Moons of the Anishinaabek calendar. Every full moon offers teachings about how to live with the changing world around us – sacred insights for these drastically altered times.

PLAY IN A BOX

It's filled to the brim with everything you need to create a play – just add a little imagination! YPT has created a special package for family fun during these indoor-days – perfect for drama lovers and storytellers. Pop open the top for a creatively-curated kit that includes a play script, tips and inspiration for costumes, sets and props - and a whole lot more - delivered right to your door this holiday season.

SHIFTING STAGES

This brand new, curated program redefines “the stage” in this time of social distancing, presenting works-in-progress that will be “performed” on alternate platforms ranging from radio and social media to text, VR and more.

BEYOND BORDERS

With *Beyond Borders*, YPT harnesses the virtual environment to break through barriers of distance, culture, artistic practice and resources. No longer bound by “place”, *Beyond Borders* will forge new relationships with playwrights from across Canada and around the world to cultivate new works for young audiences at YPT.

OUTSIDE WITH IMAGINATION

YPT brings a breath of fresh air to family fun time with *Outside with Imagination*. A spin on its video series *Inside with Imagination* launched in March, this al fresco version features special guests sharing their favourite “outdoor” drama activities.

FALL DRAMA SCHOOL

From toddlers to teens, YPT is offering [fall drama classes](#) live-streamed from newly-converted studios and led by an experienced faculty of professional artist educators. These online classes for JK-Grade 12 are offered on weekends and after-school, beginning Oct. 13. Plus, there is virtual fun for toddlers (and their caregivers!) with **Toddler Drama Time** (Nov. 5-26).

YPT FOR SCHOOLS

With new online drama-based programming, YPT is committed to continuing its work with schools, serving the needs of educators and students everywhere as they manage the challenges of remote learning. Programming includes the *Storyteller Series*, *IndigenizeUs* video series, *Right Here*, *Write Now* and the following:

EARLY STAGES – A New Play Development Experience

Featuring new plays by four playwrights, YPT will give students an inside look at the early stages of play development. Classrooms will receive exclusive access to live-streamed readings of new works in progress, followed by post-show discussions with the playwright and YPT Education & Participation staff.

The Fixing Girl by **Kevin Dyer** - Oct. 21

Sweeter by **Alicia Richardson** (YPT Playwright in Residence) - Nov. 6

Wicked Nix by **Paula Wing**, adapted from the book by Lena Coakley - Nov. 18

A new work (Untitled) by **Rhiannon Collett** - Dec. 2

INDEPTH & ONLINE WORKSHOPS

YPT's *INdepth* and *ONsite* program for schools is now available in an *online* format. The program includes customized online workshops and artist residencies, delivering interactive learning experiences for teachers and students at all grade levels.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR TEACHERS

YPT now offers online teaching resources designed to support educators in the classroom, including professional development workshops. Sessions include online teaching strategies using the arts, introductory drama teaching strategies, and using drama to facilitate English language learning. Workshops can be customized for learning and curriculum goals.

RESOURCES FOR SCHOOLS – Subsidies and Funding

- **ARTS IMPACT**

This long-standing subsidized YPT program for eligible TDSB and TCDSB schools will be offered virtually this season. Each Arts Impact package will include an online storytelling performance or play reading, as well as two workshops.

- **DAYTRIPPERS CHILDREN'S CHARITY**

YPT is thrilled to partner with Daytrippers Children's Charity to help raise awareness about funding opportunities for schools. Daytrippers provides funding to help elementary students in lower-income and remote communities experience learning opportunities from recognized educational and cultural institutions. Connect with Daytrippers to see if your school is eligible for funding for YPT's workshops and custom programs. Find out more at www.daytrippers.ca.

YPT IN THE COMMUNITY

COMMUNITY WORKSHOPS

YPT continues to strengthen its many relationships with community partners this season with safe and engaging online programs and workshops. For more information on creating customized workshops or programs, contact Aimee Bouchard, Community Programs Manager: abouchard@youngpeoplestheatre.org.

LIVE STREAMING STUDIO RENTALS

YPT has adapted its historic theatre into streaming and recording studios to continue creating online programming for its audiences. With many organizations now requiring similar facilities, YPT is making its studios available for a nominal rent for recording or live streaming performances, panel discussions, Zoom meetings, workshops, rehearsals and more. The studios range in size from single person rooms to the Mainstage.

For more information about all of YPT's fall programming, visit youngpeoplestheatre.org.

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Media Contact: Clare Hill, Communications Officer, Young People's Theatre

647.267.6550 | chill@youngpeoplestheatre.org

Photos: login **yptmedia** | password **yptphotos**