

For Immediate Release

Young People's Theatre Announces a Spring Line-Up that leaps out of the box and into outer space

Toronto, ON, Feb. 11, 2021 — [Young People's Theatre \(YPT\)](#) is thrilled to reveal an other-worldly spring line-up, exploring ground-breaking new online experiences for young people. As theatres remain closed, this universal pause has offered YPT a unique virtual opportunity to involve more youth in the development of new works, right from the get go. Many of these online programs are being designed to take the leap from screen to stage when YPT opens its doors again.

One of these exciting new programs is *Shifting Stages*, which explores "the stage" beyond floorboards and footlights with free experiential, interactive theatre in development. Following the sold-out success of YPT's [Play in a Box](#), launched this past holiday season and [featured in The New York Times](#), YPT partners with **Ghost River Theatre** to bring a new out-of-the-box experience to young audiences. [SensoryBox](#) is an exciting dive into the connection between our senses and the imagination. The adventure begins with home delivery of a wrapped box. Participants will then tune into a livestream performance with the creators (**Mar. 27, 31 & Apr. 3**) and, blindfolded, they'll be guided along as they uncover the mysterious contents of the box from the comfort of their own home and through the tips of their fingers. During this time of social distancing, *SensoryBox* offers a sense of connectivity, discovery and delight.

Shifting Stages takes to the stars this **March Break** with [Interstellar Journey](#) – a livestream experience featuring an award-winning creative team that's out of this world! **Rebecca Northan, HRH Anand Rajaram** and **Bruce Horak** will take turns directing each other in three different "digital expeditions" to discover what magic is possible in augmented reality. Audiences will be invited to help create this virtual galaxy, with an intergalactic co-star selected in advance of each performance.

"One of the great gifts of the internet is being able to transform yourself using avatars and augmented reality," said Rajaram, an award-winning improviser and AR content creator. "Like with masks and puppets, it's a really fun way to free your creative inner self by channeling through a character."

The young participants of both *SensoryBox* and *Interstellar Journey* will be a part of taking these works-in-progress to the next level.

Chris Hadfield's *The Darkest Dark*

YPT's space adventure continues with the development of Canadian Astronaut **Chris Hadfield's [The Darkest Dark](#)**, in preparation for its world premiere in 2022. This January, *The Darkest Dark* received a significant investment from The [National Arts Centre's National Creation Fund](#) - the first for an English language TYA project. The NAC's support will offer YPT an unprecedented opportunity to explore and pilot the integration of magic and illusion in this immersive theatrical event.

In May schools will receive exclusive access to **Kanika Ambrose's** adaptation of *The Gospel Truth*, which focuses on the life of an orphaned Black girl in 1850's Virginia and her awakening to the world beyond the

fences of the plantation where she is enslaved. Students will get an inside look at the play's creation through [Early Stages](#) – a program launched last fall specifically for schools that has captured the imaginations of teachers and students across Ontario. What started out as a small online experiment, in which playwrights receive feedback from students about their live-streamed readings, has become one of YPT's most successful new virtual ventures for schools.

A spring edition of the Online Playwriting Festival, [Right Here, Write Now](#), returns **April 12**, featuring new works by Playwrights **Marie Beath Badian, Tai Amy Grauman** and **Luke Reece**.

YPT continues to share compelling Indigenous and non-European tales with its online [Storytellers Series](#). **Family Day** will feature the final episode of “The Boy on the Moon” by **Louise Profeit-LeBlanc**, and this April stories by **Pamela Mordecai (Apr. 7, 14 & 21)**.

[YPT's Drama School](#) continues online with [March Break Drama Camp](#) beginning March 15 as well as spring classes starting April 10. New this year to March Break camp is ***Do I Have a Story for You!*** – a unique opportunity for campers to strengthen their literacy skills through storytelling activities and online fun.

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

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About Young People's Theatre

Young People's Theatre (YPT) is North America's oldest – and Canada's largest – professional producer and presenter of theatre for young audiences. Over the past 55 years, YPT has staged many of the most important plays that form the canon of work for youth in our country. YPT continues to develop new work and create partnerships with theatre companies across the country and around the world. The enriched learning experiences of YPT's Education & Participation Department provide young people with opportunities to develop their whole being. Through Drama School programs, workshops in community shelters and agencies, educational initiatives in Toronto classrooms, and training and apprenticeship opportunities, we place learning at the centre of everything we do. With this season's new online drama-based programming, YPT continues to support the needs of educators, students and families by creating innovative opportunities for online learning. Visit youngpeoplestheatre.org to learn more.