

For Immediate Release

Young People's Theatre Presents
CELESTIAL BODIES for Teens
One Girl's Journey Toward Self-Acceptance
Directed by Jimmy Blais
Nov. 28 – Dec. 9, 2022

TORONTO, ON (Nov. 17, 2022) – [Young People's Theatre \(YPT\)](#) presents a thought-provoking play for teens, [Celestial Bodies](#), directed by **Jimmy Blais** (Artistic Director of Geordie Theatre), written by poet and playwright **Jacob Margaret Archer**, and produced by **Geordie Theatre**. *Celestial Bodies* is a timely play about a young girl's struggles with body image – and feeling comfortable in her own skin. Recommended for ages 13 and up, *Celestial Bodies* is presented in The Studio **Nov. 28 – Dec. 9, 2022**.

This one-actor play focuses on Stella – played by **Riel Reddick-Stevens** – a fast-thinking (and even-faster-talking) teenager. Stella has barely started high school and she's already over it – her plan is to lay low and hope that no one notices that she's an awkward, anxious space geek. But when that plan goes awry, she scrambles to cope with normal teen challenges such as bullying, binge eating, and... accidentally becoming an ice hockey goalie. *Celestial Bodies* is one girl's cosmic journey toward truly owning the space she occupies.

"Jake's play is wonderfully layered and beautifully complex," says Director **Jimmy Blais**. "The teen perspective has to be one of the more challenging avenues to take in theatre; and to do it well is even harder. *Celestial Bodies* is a teen play done well. It is a simple and truthful story of an anxiety-ridden girl who struggles to find her place, and at times is heart breaking, inspirational and charmingly poetic."

"Through social media, young people's online images travel faster and farther than ever before," says YPT Artistic Director **Herbie Barnes**. "It's no wonder our young people struggle with body image. *Celestial Bodies* does a beautiful job in addressing the obstacles to self-acceptance amongst teens."

Additional credits include: Set & Costume Designer: **Eo Sharp**; Lighting Designer: **Tim Rodrigues**; Design Assistant: **Sorcha Gibson**; Production Manager/Technical Director: **Aurora Torok**; Stage Manager: **Annalise Peterson-Perry**.

YPT's 2022.23 season is proudly supported by **The Slight Family Foundation as Lead Donor**
and **BMO as Season Presenting Sponsor**.

Celestial Bodies

By Jacob Margaret Archer

Directed by Jimmy Blais (premiere production directed by Mike Payette)

Produced by Geordie Theatre

Performances:

Weekdays: Nov. 28 – Dec. 1, Dec. 6-8 at 10:30AM & 1:15PM | Dec. 5 at 1:15PM | Dec. 9 at 10:30AM

Weekends: Dec. 3 & 4 at 1:30PM

Relaxed Performances: Dec. 4 at 1:30PM and Dec. 5 at 1:15PM

Recommended for ages 13+

Run Time: Approx. 60 minutes

Tickets: Youth (1-18) and Seniors (65+): \$19 | Adults (19+): \$24 (plus HST & service charges)

Purchase Online: youngpeoplestheatre.org

Box Office: 416.862.2222

RIEL REDDICK-STEVENSON as Stella

Riel Reddick-Stevens is a multidisciplinary artist and performer originally from Cole Harbour, Nova Scotia, now located in Montreal. She is a graduate of both Randolph College for the Performing Arts and the acting program at the National Theatre School of Canada. Riel strives to make theatre that is accessible and that everyone can see themselves reflected in, with a focus on stories with themes of Blackness, Queerness, coming of age and self discovery. She is super excited to be part of this piece that is celebrating diverse bodies both onstage and in everyday life! Some of Riel's recent acting credits include: *Rough Notes* (Julie A. Johnson, McKencroft Productions); *Unity 1918* (Ken Schwartz, Two Planks and a Passion); *An Irresistible Urge to Do Something Inadvisable* (Jani Lauzon, National Theatre School); and *Electra* (Claudia Alick, CALLING UP).

JACOB MARGARET ARCHER, Playwright

Jacob Margaret Archer is a non-binary playwright, poet and dramaturge born and raised on the unceded territory called *S'ólh Téméxw* by the Stó:lō people (Chilliwack, BC). A 2019 graduate of the Playwriting program at the National Theatre School of Canada, their plays include *THINK OF THE CHILDREN* (National Theatre School, 2019); *All I Want Is To Be Happy Sometimes* (workshopped at John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, 2019); *Such A Heart As Yours* (Intrepid Theatre, 2016); and *Miss Somewhere* (Theatre BC Mainstage Festival, 2015). Their poetry has been published by post ghost press, *Raspberry* magazine, and *Relish and Muster*. They are an award-winning community theatre lighting and sound designer, an amateur guitar player, and an even more amateur choral arranger.

JIMMY BLAIS, Director

Jimmy Blais is a member of the Muskeg Lake Cree Nation; he is of Plains Cree and French settler heritage. Born and raised in Tiohtià:ke/Montreal, Jimmy graduated from Concordia University's Theatre Performance Program. He is a seasoned stage and film actor. He has worked professionally for over 10 years, for companies like the Stratford Festival, Centaur Theatre, Geordie Productions, Porte Parole and Théâtre La Licorne. Jimmy's most notable TV role was playing Watio for five seasons in APTN's hit series *Mohawk Girls*. Jimmy is also a writer, director, mentor and coach. He was the Indigenous Artist in Residence for the 2016 Students on Ice expedition to the Arctic. Jimmy successfully completed the Indigenous Artist in Residence at the National Theatre School of Canada in 2019. He is the current Artistic Director of Geordie Theatre.

EO SHARP, Set & Costume Designer

Eo Sharp has been a theatre designer for over twenty-five years working with theatres large and small across Canada: from Fringe Festivals to the Festival Stage of Stratford. Her work has been nominated eleven times for design awards, won another four awards, and has represented Canada at the Prague Quadrennial three times. As an educator, Eo has worked with the National Theatre School of Canada, Black Theatre Workshop's Mentorship Program, and Concordia, Bishop's and York Universities. Eo participated three times in The Ark, a National Arts Centre theatre research project. Her career in theatre began as a house and box office manager. She holds a BFA Honours in art history from the University of Toronto and is a graduate of the National Theatre School's Design Program.

TIM RODRIGUES, Lighting Designer

A former dancer/choreographer turned lighting designer, Tim Rodrigues has worked with an array of companies on creation-based projects and international tours. A graduate of the Contemporary Dance Department at Concordia University and the Production Design & Technical Arts Program at the National Theatre School of Canada, he is an active collaborator in both the dance and theatre communities. Notable lighting designs include: *1976* (choreographed by Dana Michel); *The River* (Magnus Theatre, Dir. Thom Currie); *Marjorie Prime* (The Segal Centre for Performing Arts, Dir. Lisa Rubin); *How Black Mothers Say I Love You* (Black Theatre Workshop, Dir. Tamara Brown); *From The Stars In The Sky, To*

The Fish In The Sea (Geordie Theatre, Dir. Mike Payette); *Serving Elizabeth* (Theatre Aquarius, Dir. Esie Mensah). A three-time META nominee for Outstanding Lighting Design, Tim proudly serves as the President of the Board of Directors for MainLine Theatre.

SORCHA GIBSON, Design Assistant

Sorcha Gibson is a Canadian scenographer, and graduate of Toronto Metropolitan University's Theatre School, and DAMU (Czech Republic). Recently, her work has explored large-scale devised and immersive experiences, the tangibility of designed materials, and how audiences engage with these designed, often tactile components and environments. Recent projects/collaborators include: *This Lament I'll Lip Sync Until I'm Born Again* (Social Growl Dance, Canada) - an interdisciplinary and auto-fictional performance created around the religious stages of lamentation; *The Last Minutes Before Mars* (Mammalian Diving Reflex, Canada) - a mixed-reality immersive 360° performance video and live performance asking pressing ethical questions about the state of humanity and the earth; *Go Away – see if I'm there* (Eva Rosemarijn, Netherlands/Norway) - a devised performance that uses audience interaction to simulate how we build and dismantle relationships; and *Shop POPAGANDA* (Bria de la Mare, Wales) – a performative post-truth pop-up shop and installation inspired by celebrity culture, the news and religious cults. These performances and others have premiered in Czech Republic, Norway, France, Germany and Canada.

AURORA TOROK, Production Manager/Technical Director

Aurora Torok is a Montreal-based scenographer and technical director who engages in all areas of theatre design, but primarily lighting design. As a well-rounded theatre practitioner, she has designed for several different types of theatre, dance and live performance, and is always happily surprised by the challenges of each individual production. Aurora is a graduate of the National Theatre School of Canada in Production Design and Technical Arts, as well as from Concordia University with a BFA - Specialization in Design for the Theatre. Recent professional productions include: *Skydancers* (A'no:wara Dance Theatre, 2022) as Lighting Director; *Anima/Darkroom* (Lucy M. May, 2021) as Touring Technical Director; *YEV* (Scapegoat Carnivale, 2021) as Technical Director and Production Manager; *Quatre-Quarts* (Théâtre des Petites Lanternes, 2021) as Lighting Designer; and *TOMORROW* (Hooks and Crooks, 2019-20) as Visual Production Designer.

ANNALISE PETERSON-PERRY, Stage Manager

Annalise Peterson-Perry is a Montreal-based theatre practitioner and graduate of Concordia University's Theatre and Development program. Having worked in theatre and film for ten years, Annalise is interested in multiple avenues of creating and supporting great storytelling. Recent credits include: Stage Manager for *The One* (Hopegrown Productions) and *Strawberries in January* (Hudson Village Theatre); Apprentice Stage Manager for *All Shall Be Well* (Repercussion Theatre) and *From the Stars in the Sky to the Fish in the Sea* (Geordie Theatre); Assistant Stage Manager for *The Blond, the Brunette and the Vengeful Redhead* (Hudson Village Theatre); and Tour Manager for Geordie Theatre's 2 Play Tour (2022). Annalise deeply enjoys bringing theatre to young audiences and is excited to do it once more.

About Young People's Theatre

Young People's Theatre (YPT) has launched the next stage in the company's 57-year history, co-led by Artistic Director Herbie Barnes and Executive Director Nancy Webster. This new era also marks the unveiling of YPT's expanded and renovated theatre complex, more than 10 years in the making. As Canada's largest and oldest professional theatre for young audiences, the company produces and presents a full season of theatre and arts education programming, serving approximately 150,000 patrons annually. With the purchase of a multi-use building across the street from its historic theatre, YPT 161 Studios, YPT has expanded its footprint, increased its accessibility, refreshed its lobbies, and upgraded the theatrical equipment capabilities of its 450-seat Ada Slight Stage and 115-seat Studio. United in vision, the two facilities now anchor the corner of Front and Frederick Streets in downtown Toronto creating Canada's largest theatre complex for young people. [Learn more.](#)



Media Contact:

Clare Hill, Communications Manager, YPT

647.267.6550 | chill@youngpeoplestheatre.org

[Photos](#): login **yptmedia** | password **yptphotos**