

Immediate Release

Young People's Theatre Presents
UNWRITTEN: THE IMPROV SHOW

Pure in-the-moment improvisation!

Directed by Herbie Barnes

May 7 – 16, 2024

TORONTO, ON (Apr. 22, 2024) – For the first time in its 58-year history, [Young People's Theatre \(YPT\)](#) is stepping into the world of improv for young audiences with [Unwritten: The Improv Show](#). This delightfully unscripted production is directed by YPT Artistic Director **Herbie Barnes** and features some of Canada's finest improv artists: Comedian **Tim Blair** – a founding member of CBC's award-winning comedy sketch show *TallBoyz*; multiple Canadian Comedy Award-winner **Lisa Merchant**; and Second City performer, writer and director **Paloma Nuñez**. This special limited engagement plays on the Ada Slight Stage **May 7 – 16, 2024** and is recommended for ages 11+.

Together, Blair, Merchant and Nuñez will demonstrate the art of play, the power of “yes”, and how to lose the fear of failure. Their thoughtful approach to the art form will often be inspired by prompts from the audience, resulting in a hilarious and spontaneous exchange of ideas.

“I grew up doing improv and continue to do improv shows to this day,” says Barnes. “My time at Second City and at Theatresports gave me the skills I needed to be an actor, director and writer. It taught me how to build a story, create a character, and be loud enough to be heard. It also taught me to be a better person by teaching me the skills of listening and collaborating.”

Barnes is thrilled to work with such an experienced trio of improv artists who will demonstrate to YPT's audiences the improviser's famous motto: YES AND. “This motto gives you the freedom to try something that has never been done before and to move forward with it, no matter what might happen,” explains Barnes. “That saying has gotten me to where I am today. Not everything you attempt may be perfect, but it's always an adventure.”

Additional credits include Stage Manager: **Andrew Dollar**.

YPT's 2023.24 Season is Proudly Supported by **The Slight Family Foundation as Lead Donor**
and **BMO as Season Presenting Sponsor**.

UNWRITTEN: THE IMPROV SHOW

Directed by Herbie Barnes

Performances:

Weekdays: May 7, 8, 9, 14, 15 & 16 at 10:15AM & 1:00PM | May 10 at 10:30AM

Weekends: May 11 & 12 at 2:30PM

Recommended for Ages 11+ | Gr. 6+

Run Time: Approx. 70 minutes

Tickets: \$10-\$39 (plus HST & service charges)

Purchase Online: youngpeoplestheatre.org

TIM BLAIR

Tim Blair is a comedian and founding member of the acclaimed comedy troupe TallBoyz II Men. Together with Bruce

McCulloch from *Kids in the Hall*, they created the multiple Canadian Screen Award-winning sketch show *TallBoyz*. A seasoned live performer, Tim excels in stand-up, sketch, and improv. He's an alumnus of Second City's House Co. and has showcased his talent at festivals like Just for Laughs Toronto and the NBC Breakout Comedy Festival.

LISA MERCHANT

Lisa Merchant is a highly sought-after improvisation instructor, facilitator and performer. She has been studying, performing and teaching the art of improvisation for more than 35 years. A senior faculty member at The Second City Training Centre and The Social Capital Theatre, Lisa is also a corporate facilitator both privately and with The Second City Works division. Since 2017 she has been Program Chair for Improv(ed) Legal Skills: Improvisation for Legal Professionals for Osgoode Hall Law School Professional Development. Lisa is a professor at Humber College in the Media and Creative Arts Department Comedy Program teaching Improvisation. She delivered workshops to some of the Canadian Olympic Team hopefuls for the London 2012 Summer Games as well as Sochi 2014 Winter Games. Most recently she taught and performed with Angel Comedy in London, U.K., and performed in the Arctic Comedy Festival in Iqaluit, Nunavut. She is a multiple nominee and winner of four Canadian Comedy Awards, including three for Best Female Improviser. As an actor, Lisa appeared on *Davey & Jonesie's Locker*, *Murdoch Mysteries*, *Private Eyes* and *American Gods*, to name a few.

PALOMA NUÑEZ

Paloma Nuñez has been working in comedy for almost 20 years. She has performed, written and directed at the Second City Toronto, on their mainstage, for their touring company, as well as their education company. Aside from the joys of live performance, Paloma plays some fun characters in popular cartoons, like *Rosie's Rules*, *Work It Out Wombats!*, *Pinecone & Pony* and *Rubble & Crew*, to name a few. TV and film credits include: Disney's *Peter Pan & Wendy*, *Odd Squad*, *Shelved*, *Baroness Von Sketch Show* and *Star Trek: Strange New Worlds*.

About Young People's Theatre

Young People's Theatre (YPT) recently launched the next stage in the company's 58-year history, co-led by Artistic Director Herbie Barnes and Executive Director Nancy Webster. This new era also marked 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 and renovation of YPT 161 Studios across the street from its historic theatre, YPT has expanded its footprint, increased its accessibility, refreshed its lobbies, and upgraded the theatrical equipment capabilities of its 433-seat Ada Slaight 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. With its broad-ranging educational programs and exceptional productions, the company has an annual operating budget of approximately \$5 million. [Learn more.](#)

– 30 –

Connect with Young People's Theatre



Media Contact:

Clare Hill
Communications Manager, YPT
647.267.6550 chill@youngpeoplestheatre.org

Photos:

Login [yptmedia](#) | password [yptphotos](#)