

Immediate Release

YOUNG PEOPLE'S THEATRE ANNOUNCES 2024.25 SEASON Join the Adventure!

TORONTO, ON (May 16, 2024) – As [Young People's Theatre](#) (YPT) enters its 59th year, Canada's largest theatre for young people invites children of all ages to join them on the ultimate adventure. From the inner workings of a famous chocolate factory – to enchanted forests filled with fairies – to the unknown entities of outer space, YPT's playbill is filled with wonderful journeys of discovery. The 6-play season begins with ***Where the Wild Things Are***, based on the cherished Maurice Sendak children's book, and winds up with a special engagement by music icon **Fred Penner**. This year's holiday musical for families is the TYA Canadian premiere of the deliciously delightful ***Charlie and the Chocolate Factory***, directed by **Thom Allison**. Following its sold-out 2023 world premiere, Chris Hadfield's ***The Darkest Dark*** is back by popular demand and will take audiences on an out-of-this-world mission, directed by **Jim Millan**, through March Break 2025. Next is the world premiere of **Paula Wing's** whimsical ***Wicked Nix***, based on the celebrated book by **Lena Coakley**, as well as the Toronto debut of the Indigenous tale ***The Mixolydian*** by **Ashley Cook**.

"Young people are the deepest untapped well of imagination in the world," says **YPT Artistic Director Herbie Barnes**. "They build adventures with their minds – sticks can be magic wands. An empty box might be a castle. Or even a rocket to the moon. Their creativity allows them to see the world in a myriad of different ways – and to recognize its potential. At YPT, young people propel the compelling work on our stages into the stratosphere through the power of their collective imaginations. We can't wait to present these adventure-filled stories to our young audiences and see their imaginations take flight."

The season opens in November with Presentation House's ***Where the Wild Things Are*** – an interactive adventure filled with guided play for ages 3 to 7, directed by **Kim Selody**. YPT's Studio audience can jump right in and help Max transform his bedroom into an exotic jungle as they sail together to the land of the Wild Things. Next, YPT celebrates the 60th anniversary of Roald Dahl's beloved ***Charlie and the Chocolate Factory***, featuring an original score and lyrics, as well as songs from the classic 1971 film. In this musical adaptation by **David Greig**, audiences will journey alongside Charlie as he and his fellow golden ticket-winners tour Willy Wonka's wonderland.

This March Break, ***The Darkest Dark*** returns to the Ada Slight Stage following its critically-acclaimed world premiere (2023 Dora Award for Outstanding Production). Commander Chris Hadfield's internationally bestselling children's book springs to life in a magical adaptation by **Jim Millan** and **Ian MacIntyre** in which nine-year-old space-loving Chris must overcome his fear of the dark in order to pursue his dream of becoming an astronaut.

In Green Thumb Theatre's ***The Mixolydian***, an 11-year-old Anishinaabe/Métis girl embarks on a journey to reconnect with her culture and language alongside her imaginary friend – a shapeshifter named Thomas. Featuring music and puppetry, this impactful Indigenous story is a gentle reminder of the importance of knowing where we come from.

YPT's **New Play Development** program unveils the world premiere of ***Wicked Nix*** – an adaptation of CBC's 2018 Best Book of the Year, directed by **Stephen Colella**. In this wonderfully whimsical tale, *Wicked Nix*, the foulest of the fairies, risks falling out of favour with the Faerie Queen if they can't safeguard her woods against the threat of humans.

The season finale is a nostalgia-filled concert by four-time Juno Award-winner **Fred Penner**, featuring catchy classics "The Cat Came Back", "What a Day" and more – a treat for audiences of all ages.

Drama School

In 2024.25, YPT's year-round [Drama School](#) offers even more ways for young artists to make YPT their creative home. Programs include the return of "Scene Study and Performance Skills", and the addition of "Musical Theatre" and "Creative Dance" to weekly programming. Classes for JK-Gr. 12 take place at YPT 161 Studios and in Etobicoke. **Registration opens June 10.** Bursaries are available.

Indigenous Programs

YPT is thrilled to launch **Northern Connections** – a brand new program in which Indigenous communities outside of the GTA will connect with Indigenous Artist Educators about the creative ways in which young people can find and use their voices. More details coming soon. YPT continues to deepen its commitment to reconciliation by offering more sessions of its in-demand [Indigenous Artists in Schools workshops](#).

Education Programs

Students, teachers, families and members of the community are encouraged to maximize their learning experience at YPT by participating in Behind-the-Scenes tours, [Play Companion Workshops](#) (subsidized options available), and engaging in post-show Q&As with members of cast and creative teams. YPT continues to provide **Relaxed Performances** and specialized post-show talkbacks, including [Tools of the Trade](#), where audiences get a sneak peek into the world of theatre production.

Advances Access & Early Bird Deals

YPT patrons enjoy advance access to tickets and packages for the 2024.25 season from **May 16 – 22**, with Early Bird pricing available for both the public and schools. Tickets to the general public go on sale **May 23**. For more information, click here. Tickets can be purchased online at youngpeoplestheatre.org.

2024.25 SEASON

Proudly supported by **The Slaight Family Foundation** as **Lead Donor** and **BMO** as **Season Presenting Sponsor**.

WHERE THE WILD THINGS ARE | *Join the wild rumpus!*

Based on the book by Maurice Sendak
Originally adapted for the stage by TAG Theatre Glasgow, Scotland
A Presentation House Theatre Production
Directed by Kim Selody

STUDIO • Nov. 7 – 17, 2024 • Recommended for Ages 3-7 | JK-Gr. 2

Sail away to the land of the Wild Things! Jump in and help Max transform his bedroom into an exotic jungle, then transport yourself to where the wild things are. After being crowned king of these magical creatures, Max must make a decision: stay and rule the Wild Things or return home. Based on the timeless children's book, *Where the Wild Things Are* by Maurice Sendak, this interactive adventure by Presentation House is filled with guided play for ages 3 to 7. Together, young ones and their caregivers can join the wild ride!

Roald Dahl's

CHARLIE AND THE CHOCOLATE FACTORY | *There's no sweeter way to spend the holidays!*

Book by David Greig, Music by Marc Shaiman, Lyrics by Scott Wittman & Marc Shaiman
Based on the novel by ROALD DAHL
Songs from the Motion Picture by LESLIE BRICUSSE and ANTHONY NEWLEY
Directed by Thom Allison

TYA CANADIAN PREMIERE

ADA SLAIGHT STAGE • Nov. 12 – Dec. 30, 2024 • Recommended for Ages 6+ | Gr. 1+

Grab your golden ticket and join Charlie Bucket on this delectable adventure into Willy Wonka's world famous chocolate factory! A world of pure imagination awaits as Charlie, Grandpa Joe and four golden ticket-winners embark on a journey brimming with chocolate rivers, gumdrop trees and cocoa-loving Oompa Loompas. Based on the much-loved novel by Roald Dahl, now celebrating its 60th anniversary, enjoy this delightfully scrumptious musical adaptation that brings to life all of your favourite characters, songs – and confections. A gobstoppingly good time for the whole family!

Features an original score and lyrics, as well as songs from the classic 1971 film including “Candy Man”, “I’ve Got a Golden Ticket”, “Oompa Loompa Song” and “Pure Imagination”.

Charlie and the Chocolate Factory-TYA is presented through special arrangement with Music Theatre International (MTI). All authorized performance materials are also supplied by MTI. www.mtishows.com.

THE DARKEST DARK | *Astronomically fun for the whole family!*

By Jim Millan and Ian MacIntyre

Based on the book by Chris Hadfield and Kate Fillion

Directed by Jim Millan

ADA SLAIGHT STAGE • Feb. 10 – Mar. 16, 2025 • Recommended for Ages 6-12 | Gr. 1-6

We have lift off! Following its sold-out world premiere in 2023, Chris Hadfield’s *The Darkest Dark* touches down for a special return engagement!

It’s the summer of 1969 and Apollo 11 is about to land on the moon. Nine-year-old space-loving Chris dreams of becoming a brave astronaut and is counting down the days to the televised event. But at bedtime, when the night closes in, so too does his fear of the dark. With his family and best friends by his side, young Chris realizes that watching history being made hinges on conquering his fear – and embracing the unknown.

Inspired by astronaut Chris Hadfield’s bestselling children’s book, this Dora Award-winning production blasted off to rave reviews.

“Gorgeous...with a gentle and kind spirit” – The Toronto Star.

“An Inspiring and entertaining all-ages show” – The Globe and Mail.

“A dazzling production” – Stage Door.

“A terrific family outing...absolutely wonderful!” – Our Theatre Voice.

Developed with support from the National Arts Centre’s National Creation Fund.

THE MIXOLYDIAN | *Indigenous tale connecting generations*

By Ashley Cook

A Green Thumb Theatre Production

ADA SLAIGHT STAGE • Mar. 24 – 29, 2025 • Recommended for Ages 6-12 | Gr. 1-6

Bellevue, an 11 year-old Anishinaabe/Métis girl, feels out of touch with the stories her Grandfather (Shoom) passed down to her. Seeking to reconnect with her culture and language, Bellevue embarks on a journey through the woods alongside her imaginary friend, a shapeshifter named Thomas. With help from her wise ancestor Nokomis, Bellevue makes surprising discoveries along the way – about herself and her

friend Thomas. Featuring puppetry and music, this unique Indigenous tale from Vancouver’s Green Thumb Theatre is a beautiful reminder to young audiences about the importance of the people and places they come from.

WICKED NIX | *A charmingly mischievous tale*

By Paula Wing

Adapted from the book by Lena Coakley

Directed by Stephen Colella

WORLD PREMIERE

ADA SLAIGHT STAGE • Apr. 28 – May 15, 2025 • Recommended for Ages 8-13 | Gr. 3-8

Nix is the foulest of the fairies. With the Faerie Queen away, this mischievous sprite is tasked with safeguarding their forest from a most dangerous enemy – humans. When one such foe settles into a cottage in the woods on the eve of the Queen’s return, Nix conjures a few wicked tricks to drive him away. His efforts fail, and Nix is faced with difficult choices and an even more dangerous truth. Based on the award-winning book by acclaimed author Lena Coakley (CBC’s 2018 Best Book of the Year), this whimsical romp explores the timeless bonds of family and the joy of finding home in unexpected places.

FRED PENNER | *Calling all Fred Heads!*

ADA SLAIGHT STAGE • May 24 – June 1, 2025 • Recommended for Ages 3-7 | JK-Gr. 2

Introduce your little ones to Canadian music Icon Fred Penner! Experience all the hummable fun of the four-time Juno Award-winner as he plays his catchy classics “The Cat Came Back”, “What a Day” and more – a nostalgia-filled treat for audiences of all ages.

For more information, visit youngpeoplestheatre.org.

About Young People’s Theatre

Young People’s Theatre (YPT) is Canada’s largest and oldest professional theatre for young audiences. Now entering its 59th season, 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 Slight Stage and 115-seat Studio. United in vision, the two facilities 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](#).

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Connect with Young People’s Theatre



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