

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

YOUNG PEOPLE'S THEATRE ANNOUNCES

2026.27 SEASON

The Hero in Us All

TORONTO, ON (May 13, 2026) — [Young People's Theatre](#) (YPT) is thrilled to announce its **2026.27 Season, *The Hero in Us All***, inviting audiences to look beyond capes and amazing feats and instead celebrate their own "everyday superpowers." With **five timely and uplifting productions**, YPT's 61st season explores how the courage, compassion, and resilience found within every young person can be a source of extraordinary strength as they navigate a fast-changing world.

The season takes flight with ***Jordan***, an empowering tribute to the boy whose legacy led to the creation of Jordan's Principle, which ensures healthcare equity for First Nations youth. The journey continues over the holidays with the heartwarming musical adaption of **Disney and Pixar's *Finding Nemo***. In the spring, Canadian music legend and four-time Juno Award winner, **Fred Penner**, returns to YPT following his sold-out engagement in 2025! That's followed by the international presentation (Ireland/UK/Norway) of ***Grand Soft Day*** — a playful look at the quiet bravery of children discovering the world. The season concludes with the acrobatic teamwork of ***Battles*** from Montreal's renowned DynamO Théâtre.

"We often talk about heroes as people with extraordinary powers, but the real heroics happen in the small, brave choices young people make every day," says **YPT Artistic Director Herbie Barnes**.

“Whether it’s standing up for what’s right or simply having the compassion to help a friend, those moments are where our 'superpowers' shine through. This season isn't about looking for a hero — it's about recognizing that the potential for heroism is already within every one of us.”

This focus on everyday heroism reflects YPT’s long-standing goal to be a place where young people explore who they are, imagine better worlds, and rehearse how to live with hope.

“In our 61st season,” says **Executive Director Camilla Holland**, “we’re proud to share stories that foster the curiosity, confidence, and collaboration young people need to discover the hero within themselves — and to shape a hopeful future together.”

The season launches in October with ***Jordan*** — a Geordie Theatre production that follows a young boy’s magical journey as he soars through space and time to help Indigenous children. This empowering story is a tribute to Jordan River Anderson whose real-life legacy led to the creation of ***Jordan’s Principle***, which ensures healthcare equity for First Nations youth.

For the holidays, YPT dives merrily under the sea with **Disney and Pixar’s *Finding Nemo***. Directed by **YPT Artistic Director Herbie Barnes**, and featuring music from the *Frozen* song-writing team, this splashy musical adventure bubbles with laughs and larger-than-life puppets as it celebrates courage, friendship, and family ties.

Over March Break, YPT welcomes back Canadian legend and four-time Juno Award winner **Fred Penner**. Returning by popular demand for a new concert series — ***The Hero in You*** — Fred celebrates the courage and resilience we build together.

In the Studio, YPT presents ***Grand Soft Day***, a charming international co-production from **Branar (Ireland) and New International Encounter (UK/Norway)**. This sensory, mostly non-verbal performance for toddlers and young children shows how bravely adapting to the unexpected can make for a great adventure. *Grand Soft Day* is part of YPT’s Room for Play series.

To close the season, DynamO Théâtre's **Battles** leaps onto the Ada Slight Stage for an acrobatic exploration of the comedy and compromise of shared space. Five performers flip, tumble, and balance around a single couch, revealing the quiet heroism required when making room for others.

We're excited to announce that, in partnership with **Théâtre français de Toronto**, we will offer two French-language school performances of **Battles (Batailles)** on Monday, May 3, at 10:15 a.m. and 1 p.m. These performances can be booked [online](#) via Théâtre français de Toronto or by phone at **416-534-6604**, or alternatively at **416-534-7303 ext.32**.

ROOM FOR PLAY

Following its delightfully fun debut last season, **Room for Play** returns! YPT's signature series designed to ignite interactions between little ones ages 1-5 and their grownups features a collection of immersive events for the 2026.27 season — made possible by a previously-approved gift from The Slight Family Foundation. Programs include: **PlayTime at YPT**, **Friday Playdate**, **Little Makers: Music & Crafts**, **YPT Choir**, **Storytime in the Studio**, and **Grand Soft Day**.

DRAMA SCHOOL

In 2026.27, YPT's year-round Drama School offers even more ways for young people to make YPT their creative home. Programs include the return of beloved classes like Musical Theatre, Improv, Play Performance, and Mini Ensemble, along with the addition of new workshop opportunities popping up throughout the year. Classes for JK-Gr. 12 take place at YPT 161 Studios and in Etobicoke. Registration opens June 11, 2026. Bursaries are available.

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 cast members 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.

TICKETS

Tickets, including our Flex-3 Pack, are on sale now. Early Bird public and school discounts are available through June 30, 2026. Tickets can be purchased at: youngpeopletheatre.org.

2026.27 SEASON

Proudly Supported By
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JORDAN | *A HERO'S JOURNEY HOME*

Written by Yvette Nolan

Directed by Jimmy Blais

A Geordie Theatre production

Ada Slaight Stage | Oct. 16 – 23, 2026

Ages 6-12 | Gr. 1-6

Soar across space and time with Jordan, a young Cree boy who helps Indigenous children with the support of his faithful spirit bear, Maskwa. While his onstage journey is magical, the play is a vibrant tribute to a very real hero: Jordan River Anderson of Norway House Cree Nation, Manitoba.

The challenges young Jordan faced during his life became the heart of a national movement that led to the creation of Jordan's Principle — a Canadian legal commitment ensuring equal healthcare for First Nations youth.

Join us for this empowering story that honours the fight for justice and equity for Indigenous communities.

Disney and Pixar's FINDING NEMO | A HOLIDAY ADVENTURE UNDER THE SEA!

Books, Music, and Lyrics by Kristen Anderson-Lopez and Robert Lopez

Book Adapted by Lindsay Anderson

Music and Orchestrations Adapted and Arranged by Myrna Conn

Based on the 2003 Disney/Pixar film *Finding Nemo* written by Andrew Stanton, Bob Peterson, David Reynolds and directed by Andrew Stanton

Directed by Herbie Barnes

Ada Slight Stage | Nov. 26 – Dec. 27, 2026

Ages 6+ | Gr. 1+

Make your holidays merry with Disney's *Finding Nemo* — an enchanting family adventure! This splashy musical adaptation of the beloved Pixar film celebrates the love between parents and children in a vivid underwater world.

When Nemo — a spirited clownfish with a "lucky fin"— is captured by a diver, his cautious father, Marlin, embarks on an epic rescue mission across the ocean. Guided by the hilariously forgetful Dory, the laid-back sea turtle Crush, and the supportive Tank Gang, father and son must discover the hero within themselves as they navigate the deep to find one another.

Bubbling with laughs, toe-tapping songs, and beautiful larger-than-life puppets, *Finding Nemo* is a joyful musical journey to celebrate the season together.

FRED PENNER: The Hero in You | MARCH BREAK FUN WITH FRED!

Ada Slight Stage | March 6 – 20, 2027

Ages 3-7 | Pre-School-Gr. 2

He's a Canadian music legend, a four-time Juno Award winner, and he's returning to YPT by popular demand! Known for his gentle spirit and acoustic storytelling, Fred Penner has spent five decades creating music that celebrates the magic of childhood. Following his sold-out 2025 run at YPT, he returns for a special March Break concert series that will lift the hearts of kids and adults alike. Featuring songs that celebrate our "everyday superpowers," Fred reminds us that heroism isn't just about capes and amazing feats — it's about the courage, compassion, and resilience we build together. Join us for this inspiring musical journey!

GRAND SOFT DAY | *WONDER, WEATHER, and WILDLY GOOD FUN!*

Directed by Marc Mac Lochlainn and Alex Byrne

Produced by Branar (Ireland) and New International Encounter (UK/Norway)

Studio | April 24 – May 2, 2027

Ages 2-6 | Toddler-SK

Splashing in puddles, wind whipping your hair, and the satisfying crunch of frost underfoot—now that sounds like a perfect day for play! This charming production invites children to step into the wilderness and experience the joy of adapting to whatever the sky brings.

The story is mostly non-verbal, unfolding through live music, physical storytelling, and a sprinkle of English, Irish, and Italian words. Co-created by the award-winning teams of Branar (Ireland) and NIE (UK/Norway), this sensory-filled performance shows that mustering the bravery to face the unexpected is what makes every day an adventure.

Presented with the support of Culture Ireland.

BATTLES | *PLAYFUL. POETIC. ACROBATIC.*

Ideator and Director Andréanne Joubert

A DynamO Théâtre Production

Ada Slaight Stage | April 26 – May 6, 2027

Ages 10+ | Gr. 5-12

One couch. Five people. Who gets to sit and who gets pushed to the floor?

Battles leaps onto the YPT stage in an acrobatic adventure that explores the tug-of-war between needing to belong and fighting to get ahead. Watch performers flip, tumble, and balance as they navigate the comedy and compromise of shared space.

From Montreal's renowned DynamO Théâtre, this energetic production reveals the quiet heroism required when making room for others — and that staying on top might matter less than holding each other up.

We're excited to announce that, in partnership with **Théâtre français de Toronto**, we will offer two French-language school performances of *Battles* (*Batailles*) on Monday, May 3 at 10:15 a.m. and 1 p.m. These performances can be booked [online](#) via Théâtre français de Toronto or by phone at **416-534-6604**, or alternatively at **416-534-7303 ext.32**.

ROOM FOR PLAY

PLAYTIME AT YPT

Studio | Sept. 26, 2026 (free event) & **Family Day, Feb. 15, 2027** (admission)

Ages 11 months – 5 years

Join us for two very special PlayTime events! This September, enjoy a *free* introduction to Room for Play programs with a morning full of stories, music, and crafts. Then, celebrate Family Day in February at YPT and choose from two delightful programs on offer: **Storytime in the Studio** and/or **Little Makers: Music & Craft** (admission required, see below for program descriptions). Babes in arms and siblings ages 5+ are welcome.

FRIDAY PLAYDATE | *Play, sing, and grow together!*

Studio | Sep. 2026 – Apr. 2027

Ages 0-5 years

Play, explore, and experience a joyful song circle in a comfy space created just for YPT's very youngest audiences! For two Fridays each month, our Studio theatre is transformed into a cozy playspace with soft surfaces, sensory-friendly toys, and activities that spark imaginative play and meaningful interactions between little ones and their grownups. Unique to this program are special 30-minute song circles that fuse music, drama, and play, led by guest artist-educators.

LITTLE MAKERS: Music & Crafts

Studio | Oct. 2026 – Apr. 2027

Ages 1-5 years

Get ready to sing, move, and create together in this lively music-and-craft experience! Ms. Aria and Ms. Saira bring their signature *Songs of the Seasons* flair to lead the fun, beginning with an interactive performance full of songs and movement, followed by a hands-on arts and crafts workshop where families create something special together. This event runs approximately 60 minutes.

YPT CHOIR | *Where Joy and Music Meet!*

Studio | **Sept. 20, 2026 – Mar. 7, 2027**

Ages 5+

Unleash your voice in this unique program for children ages 5+ and their grownups to sing, play, and build a musical community together. Over five weeks, participants will learn songs inspired by this season's shows, and connect as an ensemble through drama-inspired games. Sessions will feature guest professionals and will culminate with **one top-secret performance at YPT!**

STORYTIME IN THE STUDIO | *Step Inside a Story!*

Studio | **Mar. 18 – April 18, 2027**

Ages 2-5 years

Introduce your little ones to live storytelling in a space and at a pace designed just for them! From timeless stories to magical adventures, and tales of discovery, courage, and belonging, these sessions will spark curiosity and wonder in early learners, while building active listening, focus, and attention skills. With professional artists guiding the way, children and their caregivers will have the opportunity to connect with each other and experience the magic of interactive storytelling.

For more information, visit: www.youngpeopletheatre.org.

About Young People's Theatre

Young People's Theatre (YPT) is Canada's largest and oldest professional theatre for young audiences, currently celebrating its 61st season. The company produces and presents a full season of theatre alongside year-round arts education programming. Located in Toronto's St. Lawrence district, YPT encompasses two state-of-the-art facilities: the **modern YPT 161 Studios** and the **historic theatre at 165 Front St.**, which houses the **433-seat Ada Slaight Stage** and a **115-seat Studio**. United in vision, this creative hub forms Canada's premier theatre complex for young people. Here, they can explore who they are, imagine better worlds, and rehearse living together with hope.

[Learn more.](#)

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