



Expanding the
possibilities
of performance

SUMMERWORKS PERFORMANCE FESTIVAL 2023

DIVERSE ENCOUNTERS AND CURIOUS COLLABORATIONS

SENSORIAL PERFORMANCE EXPERIENCES AND UNIQUE CREATIVE EXCHANGES

CREATIVE CONNECTIONS HEIGHTENING THE EMBODIED AWARENESS OF THE WORLD AROUND US

AUGUST 3 - AUGUST 13, 2023

IN THE EAST AND WEST ENDS OF TORONTO AT VARIOUS VENUES

TORONTO (June 28, 2023) As an organization at the forefront of contemporary performance, **SUMMERWORKS** is thrilled to announce a passionately curated selection of artists and creative collaborators as part of the 33rd **SUMMERWORKS PERFORMANCE FESTIVAL**. Celebrating through diversity and intimacy, **SUMMERWORKS PERFORMANCE FESTIVAL** will feature an eclectic mix of programming in a multitude of formats, including theatre, dance, and sound/music performances, sensorial experiences, site-responsive activations, and community gatherings. The Festival is presented in both the East and West ends of Toronto at *The Citadel: Ross Centre for Dance*, *Aki Studio at Daniels Spectrum*, and *The Theatre Centre* from **August 3 – August 13, 2023**.

In addition, earlier this year, **SUMMERWORKS** announced its newly appointed co-leadership. **SUMMERWORKS** is now co-led by **Michael Caldwell** as Artistic Director and **Morgan Norwich** as Managing Director: *“With the announcement of our first Festival as co-leaders at SummerWorks, we are delighted for audiences to encounter this dynamic blend of performances, experimentations, installations, workshops, and community engagements, and further thrilled to host our Festival events and activities in indoor venues and outdoor spaces in both ends of the city. There’s a sensation that’s palpable; there’s a spark that ignites when we share space in intimacy and in proximity with one another. Whether it’s in the theatre, at the Market, or on the dance floor, we look forward to sharing space with you at SummerWorks in August.”*

Cultivating space for exploration and innovation through theatre, dance, music, live art, interdisciplinary and hybrid forms, **SUMMERWORKS PERFORMANCE FESTIVAL** initiatives are split into four programming streams, offering audiences a dynamic choice in how they choose to engage with the work, as a participant or spectator. **SummerWorks Presentations** include fully-developed new works, giving us a snapshot of the future of contemporary performance. **SummerWorks Lab** is a place for exploration, experimentation, and process, allowing the Festival to support projects at crucial stages of development and forge connections between artists and audiences. In the Lab, the audience experiences art

at a critical juncture and plays an essential role in the development of new work.

SummerWorks Public Works are free performances and artworks that aim to bring artists and audiences together to experience public space in new ways. Finally, the **SummerWorks Exchange**, encapsulating the Festival's professional development and industry activities, offers community workshops, facilitated discussions, mentorship, and networking opportunities for artists, audiences, and industry professionals.

2023 SUMMERWORKS PERFORMANCE FESTIVAL PROGRAMMING HIGHLIGHTS:

Unique to this year, **SUMMERWORKS PERFORMANCE FESTIVAL** is collaboratively curated by six guest curators - **Sue Balint**, **Ralph Escamillan**, **Aria Evans**, **Jiv Parasram**, **ted witzel**, and **Alison Wong**.

This year's **SUMMERWORKS PERFORMANCE FESTIVAL** proudly features a wide range of artistic programming that invites audiences to gather together to create new connections with one another and experience the palpable joys of intimacy, ephemerality, and community.

SummerWorks Presentations features three unique performances from artists working across Canada and around the world.

Two of these performances deconstruct and modernise Shakespearean texts, giving audiences the opportunity to experience this theatrical canon in an entirely new framework.

Lady M, created and directed by Glasgow-based **Ramesh Meyyappan**, is the premiere production of Toronto's **1s1 Theatre**, a Deaf-led theatre company founded by **Dawn Jani Birley**. A uniquely visual and physical work, this Deaf-led adaptation of Macbeth explores this famous power couple with an intersectional experience for both Deaf and hearing audiences.

Beginning as a performance lecture and critical analysis, ***i am your spaniel, or, A Midsummer Night's Dream by William Shakespeare by Gislina Patterson*** deconstructs into a kaleidoscope of projected dog and Iggy Pop videos, thunderous music, identity and species-swapping monologues, and object puppetry. Winnipeg-based artists, **Gislina Patterson** and **Dasha Plett (We Quit Theatre)** return to the Festival with this boundary-pushing and genre-bending work about transformation, desire, and what it means to be a man.

In ***The Seventh Fire***, Vancouver-based creator **Lisa Cooke Ravensbergen** draws from Anishinaabe stories and oral traditions to create an immersive audio performance inspired by Indigenous ceremony. Audiences are invited to lie down, sit or move around as the artists invoke sound and story as a somatic link to ancestral realms.

Dancing through curiosity, risk, and innovation, the **SummerWorks Lab** invites us to immerse in the creative process and engage in conversation. This year's **SummerWorks Lab** programming centres dance and movement-based practices in relation to story, sound, design, fashion, language, and contemporary culture.

A surreal dance-theatre journey, **Sharon Moore**, **Lilia Leon**, and **Irma Villafuerte** share work-in-process excerpts from **DOUBLE**, a female-led collaboration following two explorers

in their quest to understand their own existence.

A first-time meeting and collaboration, Ballroom artists **Matthew ‘Snoopy’ Cuff** (Toronto), **ivy hazard** (Vancouver), and **Chéline Lacroix** (Montréal) explore their divergent yet complimentary creative practices in ***Ballroom, Too***.

At the intersection of music, video, and performance, **R. Flex** and **Driftnote** experiment with relationality, and explore liveness and radical presence.

Emerging dance creators, **Kt Ayer** and **Ellen Moore** each present newly-developed works that explore intimacy, tension, and sensation.

Under the banner of ***Summerworks Public Works***, artist, scholar, and vegan chef, **Aisha Lesley Bentham** invites us into the world of ***TERRAFORM***, a two-part performance installation that explores the methods and practices of preservation. Small groups of audience members are treated to an intimate two-course mise en bouche tasting.

Activated in select Farmer’s Markets across the city of Toronto, audiences of all abilities are called into ***The Lettuce Head Experience***. **Alyssa Martin (Rock Bottom Movement)** dives into her non-dancer movement practice to teach an outdoor workshop, with live music by **Jacob Vanderham aka Telehorn**.

And returning to the Festival, **Switch Collective** brings forward their innovative creation and performance methodology to activate community-engaged spaces in the Parkdale and Regent Park neighbourhoods.

SummerWorks Exchange is excited to feature a variety of community and industry activities that expand the possibilities of performance and encourage conversation.

This year, **Graham Isador** returns to the Festival once again, to deliver a staged play reading of ***Truck***, a retirement speech for the last truck driver in America, as a result of automation, with **Adam Lazarus**, **Ellie Moon**, and **Tim Walker**.

With various workshop opportunities, facilitated discussions, and more, **SUMMERWORKS PERFORMANCE FESTIVAL** is proud to feature initiatives that expand professional and community development.

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COMMUNITY GATHERINGS

OPENING NIGHT CELEBRATION

VENUE: DANIELS SPECTRUM

A summertime evening of diverse artistic encounters, kicking off the Festival on Thursday, August 3rd.

CLOSING WEEKEND PARTY

VENUE: THE THEATRE CENTRE

A lively and celebratory evening and dance and music, on Saturday, August 12th.

SUMMERWORKS PRESENTATIONS

LADY M (*world premiere*)

DIRECTOR: RAMESH MEYYAPPAN

PERFORMERS: DAWN JANI BIRLEY, STURLA ALVSVÅG

VENUE: THE THEATRE CENTRE (FRANCO BONI THEATRE)

A new, Deaf-led adaptation of Macbeth that explores Shakespeare's famous power couple with an intersectional experience for both Deaf and hearing audiences, focusing primarily on Lady Macbeth and her husband, delving into their rich and complicated relationship.

I AM YOUR SPANIEL, OR, A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM BY WILLIAM

SHAKESPEARE BY GISLINA PATTERSON (*world premiere*)

CREATORS: GISLINA PATTERSON AND DASHA PLETT

VENUE: THE THEATRE CENTRE (INCUBATOR)

A drag performance lecture in which a Shakespeare scholar reads A Midsummer Night's Dream too closely and turns into a dog, exploring the family as a site of control, theatre as state propaganda, being in love, becoming a traitor, and what it means to be a man.

THE SEVENTH FIRE (*Toronto premiere*)

CREATOR: LISA COOKE RAVENSBERGEN

VENUE: AKI STUDIO, DANIELS SPECTRUM

An immersive audio performance conjuring the feeling of Indigenous ceremony and connecting to ancestral realms through story and sound, in a relaxed performance setting.

SUMMERWORKS LAB

BALLROOM, TOO

ARTISTS: MATTHEW 'SNOOPY' CUFF, IVY HAZARD, AND CHÉLINE LACROIX

VENUE: THE THEATRE CENTRE (FRANCO BONI THEATRE AND GALLERY)

Three Ballroom artists meet for the first time, diving deep into their individual and unique creative practices, seeking an activation of theatrical space, and a public sharing of Ballroom history.

DOUBLE

CREATORS: LILIA LEON, SHARON MOORE, AND IRMA VILLAFUERTE

VENUE: THE CITADEL: ROSS CENTRE FOR DANCE (THEATRE)

A surreal, multi-lingual dance-theatre journey following two explorers in their quest to understand their own existence, how everything is connected and how to love, combining dance, theatre, sound, and video design.

UNTITLED

CREATOR: R. FLEX AND DRIFTNOTE

VENUE: THE THEATRE CENTRE (INCUBATOR)

By deflating hierarchies between different performance mediums, the artists explore their relationality in the here and now, through an ephemeral blend of music, video, and performance.

52 (NAVIGATION)

CREATOR: ELLEN MOORE

VENUE: THE CITADEL: ROSS CENTRE FOR DANCE (THEATRE)

A study in intimacy, form, and task-based improvisation, manifesting in an abstract portrayal of the tenderness, strength, vulnerability, and strangeness between two people.

WITHIN SENSATION

CREATOR: KT AYER

VENUE: THE CITADEL: ROSS CENTRE FOR DANCE (THEATRE)

Through contemporary dance practice, the work explores how tension lives in the body, how

it accumulates over time, and how we cope with it.

SUMMERWORKS PUBLIC WORKS

TERRAFORM

CREATOR: AISHA LESLEY BENTHAM

VENUE: THE THEATRE CENTRE (ROOFTOP PATIO)

A two-part performance installation: a visual display of ancient food preservation methods and a nosh installation with an intimate two-course mise en bouche tasting experience.

THE LETTUCE HEAD EXPERIENCE

CREATOR: ALYSSA MARTIN AND JACOB VANDERHAM AKA TELEHORN

VENUE: FARMERS MARKETS ACROSS THE CITY OF TORONTO (TBA)

An energetic movement-based workshop based on Alyssa's non-dancer movement practice, with live music by Telehorn, culminating in a short performative showing within each Market setting, open to the general public.

SWITCHING QUEEN(S) REPRISED AND SWITCH REGENT(S): MAKING STREET THEATRE MAGIC

CREATORS: SWITCH COLLECTIVE (SEDINA FIATI, LEXI SPROULE AND NATY TREMBLAY)

VENUE: PARKDALE AND REGENT PARK NEIGHBOURHOODS

An audiovisual-based queer political street performance experience in Parkdale, and a three-day residency in Regent Park, for participants to develop their skills and ideas for political street-based performance art, culminating in a community offering.

SUMMERWORKS EXCHANGE

TRUCK

CREATOR: GRAHAM ISADOR

PERFORMERS: ADAM LAZARUS, ELLIE MOON, AND TIM WALKER

VENUE: THE THEATRE CENTRE (FRANCO BONI THEATRE)

A staged play reading about a retirement speech for the last truck driver in America after all trucks become self-driving through automation.

INTERNATIONAL CHOREOGRAPHIC INTERLINK: TORONTO-TAIPEI

CREATORS: WU-KANG CHEN, FANGAS NAYAW, AND PIN-WEN SU

VENUE: THE CITADEL: ROSS CENTRE FOR DANCE (THEATRE)

Three Taiwan-based movement artists share their creative practices and artistic work in an informal session, hosted and guided by Toronto-based artists Michael Caldwell, Andrea Nann, and Heidi Strauss.

LIGHT, FORM + STAGE: PROJECTION MAPPING WORKSHOP

INSTRUCTOR/ARTIST: MAZIER GHADERI

VENUE: THE CITADEL: ROSS CENTRE FOR DANCE (THEATRE)

A hands-on, guerilla 2-day course for theatre professionals and designers, leading to a public proof-of-concept projection mapping showing, in collaboration with three performance groups from Iran.

THE DINNER PARTY w/ MEANS OF PRODUCTION

CREATORS: PIP BRADFORD, PATRICK LYNN, LAURA PHILLIPPS, AND REBECCA VANDEVELDE

VENUE: TBA

A guided conversation over dinner, focused on labour justice, working conditions, and the gig economy, among other related topics.

CURATORS IN CONVERSATION

VENUE: ONLINE

All six SummerWorks Performance Festival guest curators engage in a collective conversation about their individual curatorial practices and unpack what led each of them to the ideas in this year's Festival.

THE READING ROOM

VENUE: THE CITADEL: ROSS CENTRE FOR DANCE

A relaxed, cafe-style atmosphere filled with various writings on creative practices and processes in dance and theatre.

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PERFORMANCE & ACCESSIBILITY INFORMATION

The Festival features a portion of relaxed performances specifically designed to welcome people who will benefit from a more relaxed performance environment. Personal service workers and service animals are welcome (with no additional admission fees required). All venues will have accessible entrances and washrooms; accessible seating will be identified in all venues and reserved for those who require it.

ABOUT SUMMERWORKS

SUMMERWORKS expands the possibilities of performance. **SUMMERWORKS** is a leader, collaborator, and community builder at the forefront of contemporary performance, asking crucial questions; nurturing artistic innovation; and presenting new works that reflect the complexity and diversity of our society. Anchored by our annual **SUMMERWORKS PERFORMANCE FESTIVAL** in August, SummerWorks offers a year-round program of creation, presentation, and learning opportunities for artists and audiences.

SUMMERWORKS PERFORMANCE FESTIVAL DETAILS:

When: Thursday, August 3 – Sunday, August 13, 2023

Where: Various venues, Farmer's Markets, and neighbourhoods across Toronto

Ticketing Information: Tickets on sale July 19, 2023.

FULL ticket, schedule, accessibility info & more location details coming July 19, 2023.

SUMMERWORKS programming is kindly supported by the Government of Canada, Canada Council for the Arts, Toronto Arts Council, Ontario Arts Council, Lindy Green Charitable Family Foundation, Aubrey & Marla Dan Foundation, TD Bank Group, National Culture and Arts Foundation (Taiwan), as well as partners Associate Designers of Canada, Buddies in Bad Times, Citadel + Compagnie, Dance Arts Institute, The Dance Centre, Dance on Fluid, Dancemakers, Evergreen Brick Works, Generator, Monnet Design, Native Earth Performing Arts, Ontario Presents, Stratford Festival, The Theatre Centre, Urban Space, We Island Dance Festival, Wild Soma, and Why Not Theatre.

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