



Expanding the  
possibilities  
of performance

## **SUMMERWORKS PERFORMANCE FESTIVAL 2024: *SURVIVAL MODE***

**SUMMERWORKS PRESENTS BOLD CREATIVE EXPRESSIONS THAT ENGAGE  
WITH THE IDEA OF SURVIVAL**

**A DIVERSE MIX OF ARTISTIC PERSPECTIVES SHARED THROUGH THE ACT  
OF GATHERING, IN CONVERSATION, AND COMMUNITY**

**34TH EDITION: AUGUST 1 - AUGUST 11, 2024  
ACROSS TORONTO**

TORONTO (June 26, 2024): A creative collaborator and community builder at the forefront of contemporary performance, **SUMMERWORKS** is thrilled to announce a bold and creative 2024 Festival with 35 projects across four streams of programming, featuring 100+ artists and creative collaborators from local, national, and international contexts. This year's Festival theme is *Survival Mode*. **SUMMERWORKS** will engage with this idea subtly and bluntly, with nuanced complexity, while holding space for diverse perspectives and lived experiences. The **SummerWorks Performance Festival** will be held across Toronto at various venues from August 1 to August 11, 2024.

*"After receiving and reviewing hundreds of artistic proposals from across Canada, it was abundantly clear that 'survival' was a significant thread weaving through so many of our creative communities. Arriving at *Survival Mode* as this year's Festival theme underpins what has always been true about SummerWorks - we deeply listen to our artists and audiences and respond accordingly with innovative, risky, and boundary-pushing Festival programming. As we respond to the zeitgeist and hold space for all of the nuance and complexity within 'survival', we are excited to gather together in conversation and in the community to witness thoughtful, surprising, and inspiring live performance."* - **Michael Caldwell, Artistic Director of SummerWorks and Morgan Norwich, Managing Director**

Exploring the theme of *Survival Mode*, **SUMMERWORKS** proposes gathering through conversations and in the community as a pathway toward understanding, reconciliation, and joy. **SUMMERWORKS** offers four distinct programming streams: **SummerWorks Presentations, SummerWorks Lab, SummerWorks Public Works, and SummerWorks Exchange**.

This year, **SUMMERWORKS** embarks on new and exciting initiatives and partnerships with many local companies and organizations. **SUMMERWORKS** will partner with Union Station to program eight Wednesday evenings at *Union Summer* from June 26 to August 21, 2024, marking a significant expansion to the Festival's summer events and activities. The **SummerWorks International Development Strategy** fosters long-term and sustainable engagement with diverse international artists and companies, focusing on Taiwan and South Korea in 2024. In addition, our new **SummerBreak** programming initiative highlights

performances and workshops focused on rest and reflection.

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**SummerWorks Presentations** are fully developed new works, offering a snapshot of contemporary boundary-defying performance. Highlights include the world premiere of **Versus** by Adam Lazarus, a one-person interactive odyssey to hell and back as he tries to have a good day on a bad day; **The Movements**, a documentary multidisciplinary performance about wealth inequality in the global economy, in the form of a choreographed 90-minute workout routine by Halifax-based, ZUPPA; **Bimbos in Space!**, a feminist manifesto stuffed into an ensemble comedy, by Hamilton-based, Femmepire; the Canadian premiere of **SUBJECT TO**, a solo performance by Moroccan-born Mehdi Dahkan that explores silence as a means of resistance; **slip away**, a solo contemporary dance work showcasing Indigenous performer Samantha Sutherland's journey to learn her maternal language, Ktunaxa; the hilarious solo clown comedy **Beth-Anne**, a girl who turns herself into a horse along her journey to self acceptance; **Microphone Controller**, a dance and sensory concert with songs, speeches, moans, thrashes, and American Sign Language; **Warm Up**, a dance theatre performance about our relationship to nature and overconsumption, that is entirely powered by a stationary bicycle; and finally, the world premiere of **Growing Up Regent**, a new play highlighting authentic characters rooted in the lived experience and diasporic stories of Toronto's Regent Park community.

**SummerWorks Lab** is a place for exploration, experimentation, and process, where new work is incubated or shared at crucial stages of development. This year, the Lab highlights include **Too Dirty to Clean**, a devised object theatre project that satirizes the addiction recovery industrial complex and critiques the language and logic of purity and cleanliness; **Slug Meal**, a hyper-physical solo performative digestion of an intercultural inquiry between whiteness and the body; **A, Brazil flag emoji, 47**, a play addressing the memory's lasting power and fragmented nature, to explore fatherlessness in marginalized communities; **It's a Shame**, a digital site-specific performance that is livestreamed on OnlyFans, exploring how shame impacts the working conditions of the sex work industry and the perception of sex workers; **Worm Moon**, a performance ritual that takes an audience through the process of actively building a worm-coposter; **Awake and Still Drowning**, an immersive group experience and an unsettling public performance, using VR headsets; from the Métis legend, **Rougarou**, a new horror-themed play, where reality is far more horrifying than fiction; and **C<sup>3</sup>**, a solo contemporary dance performance focused on the exploration of corners, edges, and hinges.

**SummerWorks Public Works** is a series of free performances that bring artists and audiences together to experience and deepen their relationship with public space in new ways. The six works presented in five distinct outdoor spaces include **Homebuddies**, a playful and grotesque critique that calls us to re-examine our relationship between the homes of our bodies and the bodies of our homes; **S'imbriquer**, a durational performative installation where two performers and 300 bricks architect together, creating a transformative living ruinscape; **Surrendered Spirits**, an interdisciplinary movement duet that excavates the memories of childhood fractures and joy; **What is Left of Us**, an interactive experience designed for one person at a time inside a phone booth exploring the traces we leave in our wake as a society; **Wheezy Breezy**, an interdisciplinary durational performance engaging audiences from low-income and disabled communities; and lastly, a dynamic public presentation from **Rudy Ray & Co.**, inspired by African jazz, hip-hop, blues, and soul music and sound.

The **SummerWorks Exchange** is a dynamic space for emergent creative thinking to come into focus and conversation. It gathers diverse communities together with intention around relevant and urgent topics in artmaking practices. This year's Exchange features

nine unique projects, and takes place within a condensed timeframe within the Festival (August 6-9).

There are two new exciting initiatives for this year's Festival. **SummerBreak** was conceived in direct response to emergent and urgent topics of conversation in Toronto's performance community. It will happen exclusively on August 5th. It is a full day of free performances and workshops focused on the theme of rest and reflection, situated in the middle of the festival, featuring Elder Duke Redbird, Wild Soma, and more.

In the context of **Union Summer**, a new partnership with Union Station presents live performances on an outdoor stage located directly in front of the terminal building on Front Street West every Wednesday between June 26 and August 21. This unique programming expands the Festival's geographic footprint, broadens our audience, and extends the timeframe of our artistic programming outside of our typical August dates.

In addition, as part of the **SummerWorks International Development Strategy**, this year's Festival will focus on three presentations from Taiwanese dancemakers and two **SummerWorks Exchange** projects featuring collaborations between South Korean and Canadian artists. Featured Taiwanese works include the Canadian premiere of **Girl's Notes III**, a solo performance that pays attention to women who have retreated from public space because of the isolating effects of the pandemic; **Meet the Bones**, a movement meditation with four performers exploring new cohesive ways of using their bodies and minds; and the world premiere of **Three Dots**, an examination of play within contemporary Taiwanese Indigenous family structures.

**SummerWorks Performance Festival** events and activities will be presented across Toronto at Aki Studio, The Citadel: Ross Centre for Dance, The Esplanade, Evergreen Brick Works, Factory Theatre, Lisgar Park, Regent Park, The Theatre Centre, Theatre Passe Muraille, and Union Station.

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#### **ABOUT SUMMERWORKS:**

Entering its 34th year, SummerWorks Performance Festival expands the possibilities of performance as Canada's premier curated live performance festival. We are a leader, collaborator, and community builder at the forefront of contemporary performance – asking crucial questions, nurturing artistic innovation, and presenting works that reflect the complexity and diversity of our society. We are widely recognized as one of the most important platforms for launching new and innovative Canadian work.

#### **SUMMERWORKS PERFORMANCE FESTIVAL DETAILS:**

**When:** Thursday, August 1 – Sunday, August 11, 2024

**Where:** Various venues and neighbourhoods across Toronto

**Ticketing Information:** Tickets on sale July 11, 2024

**SUMMERWORKS** is kindly supported by the Department of Canadian Heritage, Canada Council for the Arts, Government of Ontario, Ontario Arts Council, Ontario Trillium Foundation, Toronto Arts Council, TD Ready Commitment, Aubrey & Marla Dan Foundation, Metcalf Foundation, Lindy Green Family Foundation, Taipei Cultural Center in New York and Ministry of Culture, Taiwan, as well as partners Citadel + Compagnie, Factory Theatre,

Native Earth Performing Arts, The Theatre Centre, Theatre Passe Muraille, Evergreen, Jamii, Union Station, National Arts Centre, Dancemakers, Why Not Theatre, Buddies in Bad Times, Dance Arts Institute, b current Performing Arts, Cahoots Theatre Company, dance: made in Canada; Diaspora Dialogues, Furies, Ontario Presents, Toronto Fringe, TO Live, adelheid, Balancing Act, Chimerik, Nova Dance, Wild Soma, B Rebel Communications, and Monnet Design.

**WEBSITE:**

<https://summerworks.ca/>

**SOCIAL MEDIA:**

[FACEBOOK](#)

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**MEDIA CONTACT:**

For all media inquiries, contact: **B-REBEL COMMUNICATIONS**

**Ashley Belmer, [Ashley@b-rebelcommunications.com](mailto:Ashley@b-rebelcommunications.com)**

**Victoria Laberge, [Victoria@b-rebelcommunications.com](mailto:Victoria@b-rebelcommunications.com)**