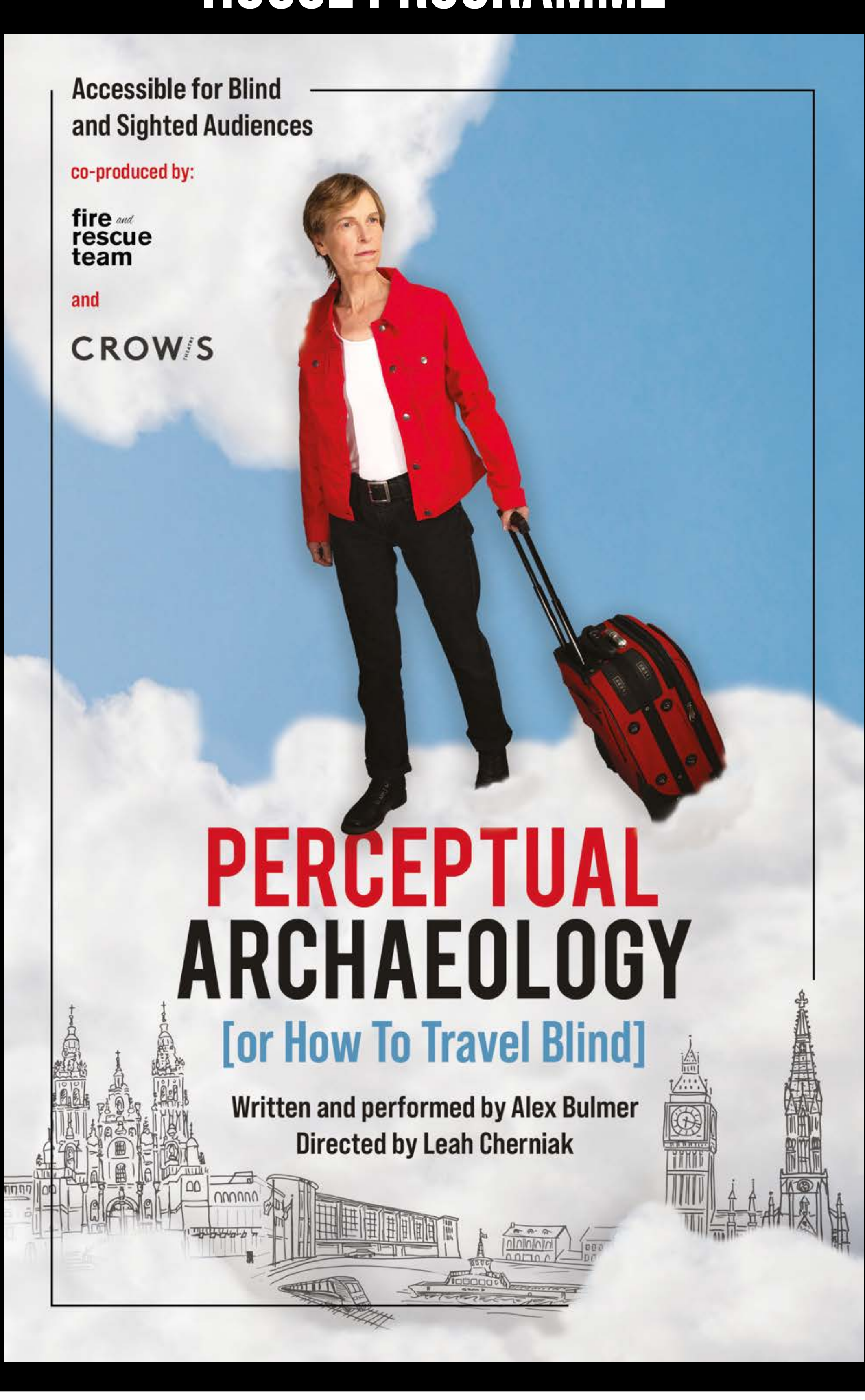
HOUSE PROGRAMME


Accessible for Blind and Sighted Audiences
co-produced by:
fire and rescue team
and
CROW'S
PERCEPTUAL ARCHAEOLOGY
[or How To Travel Blind]
Written and performed by Alex Bulmer
Directed by Leah Cherniak

Crow's Theatre and Fire and Rescue Team present

PERCEPTUAL ARCHAEOLOGY (OR HOW TO TRAVEL BLIND)

Written and Performed by Alex Bulmer
Directed by Leah Cherniak
June 1 to 25, 2023
Opening Night: **Tuesday, June 6 @ 8pm**
Studio Theatre
WORLD PREMIERE

THE COMPANY

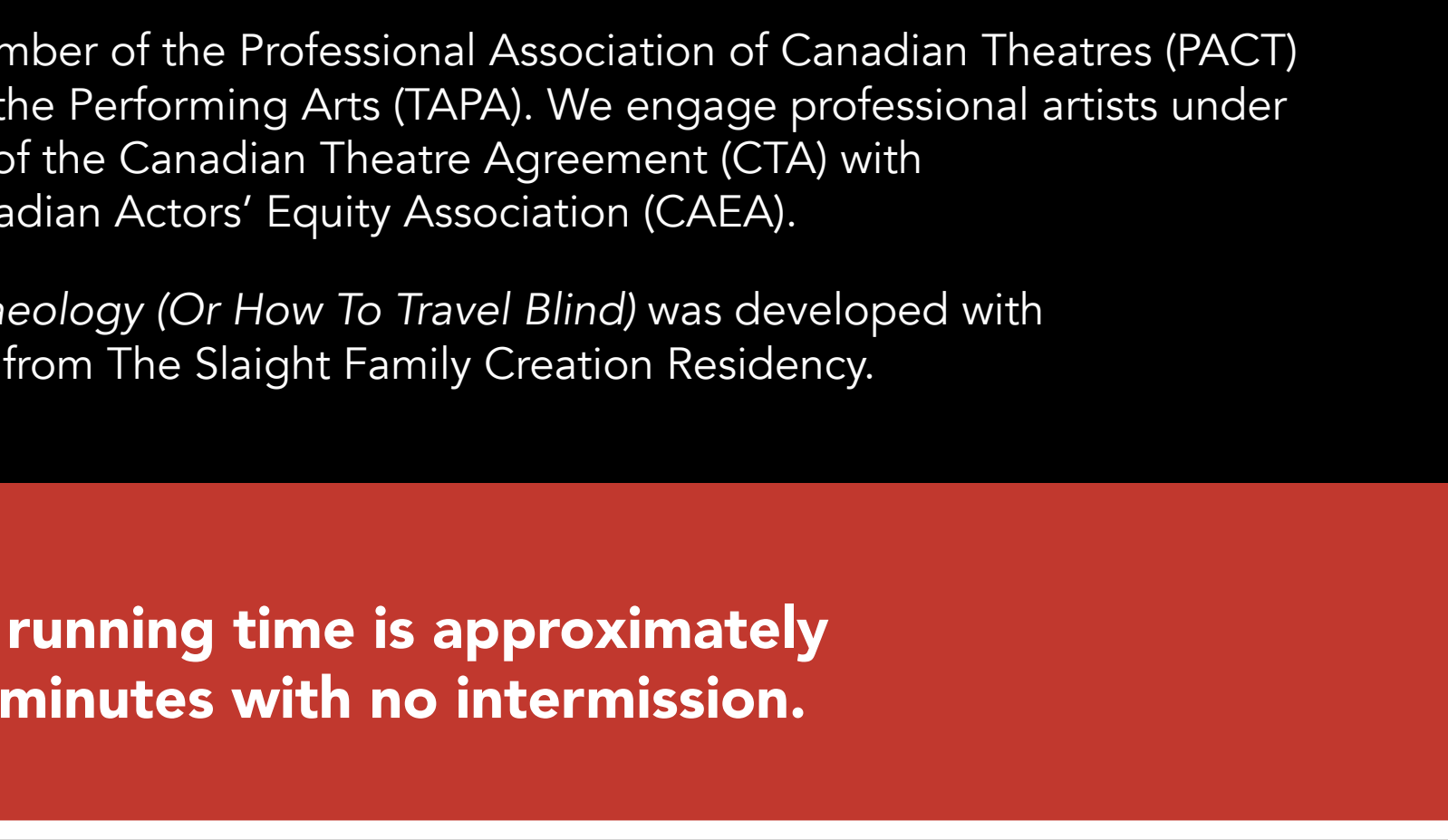
ALEX BULMER	Playwright and Performer
LEAH CHERNIAK	Director
ENZO MASSARA	Line Feeder and Performer
DEANNA H. CHOI	Sound Designer
THOMAS RYDER PAYNE	Sound Designer
VICTORIA WALLACE	Set, Props, and Costume Designer
DAVE DEGROW	Lighting Designer
LAURA PHILIPPS	Fire and Rescue Team Producer
MEGAN WILK	Fire and Rescue Team Associate Producer
SALLY ROBERTS	Production Manager
NEHA ROSS	Stage Manager
RIVER OLIVEIRA	Sound Technician
DR. JESSICA WATKIN	Disability Dramaturg
BECKY GOLD	Offstage Creative Enabler
LORNA CRAIG	Assistant Director and Script Coordinator
SARAH YUEN	Set, Props, and Costume Assistant Designer
MARGARET ROSE	Support Worker
MICK ROBERTSON	Support Worker
VIV MOORE	Clog Dancer
EVAN HARKAI	Carpenter and Production Support

Crow's Theatre is a proud member of the Professional Association of Canadian Theatres (PACT) and the Toronto Alliance for the Performing Arts (TAPA). We engage professional artists under the terms of the Canadian Theatre Agreement (CTA) with Canadian Actors' Equity Association (CAEA).

Perceptual Archaeology (Or How To Travel Blind) was developed with support from The Slaight Family Creation Residency.

The running time is approximately 90 minutes with no intermission.

WELCOME TO CROW'S THEATRE



Welcome to Streetcar Crowsnest for the world premiere of Alex Bulmer's *Perceptual Archaeology (Or How To Travel Blind)*. This project is a co-production between Crow's Theatre and Fire and Rescue Team and has been several years in the making.

The Team at Crow's Theatre is grateful to Alex, the whole Fire and Rescue Team, and all the creators and enablers, for their insights, knowledge sharing, and imagination. They have created a wonderfully generous and witty invitation to experience the world, and the world of theatre, with Alex as our guide. We feel very lucky to have played even a small part in helping to nurture this project. We want to thank the Slaight Family Foundation and TD Bank for their support, and you for celebrating artistic innovators like Alex Bulmer and the Fire and Rescue Team here in our Studio Theatre.

As we near the end of our 2022/23 season, we look forward to our 40th anniversary season, kicking off in September. Across a fabulously eclectic series of dramas, true-life stories, fantasies, comedies, two operas, and a musical, our 40th anniversary season will offer audiences 12 shows that celebrate the artistic excellence Toronto has to offer. Please visit our website to see the full season and the many ways to save by becoming a subscriber.

Before we head into our summer break, we have one final offering in the season: the Crow's Theatre debut of principal dancer and choreographic associate at The National Ballet of Canada, Guillaume Côté's *X (Dix)*, produced by his company Côté Danse. It will be an unmissable and rare opportunity to see some of the world's best contemporary dance right here at Crow's.

Thank you for being with us this season, enjoy the show!

CHRIS ABRAHAM, ARTISTIC DIRECTOR
SHERRIE JOHNSON, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
CROW'S

MESSAGE FROM FIRE AND RESCUE TEAM

In 2014, the Winston Churchill Trust funded Alex Bulmer to pursue a Blind travel writing project inspired by the nineteenth century British Blind travel writer James Holman. She was later commissioned to turn her travel writing into five essays for BBC radio. These essays are the foundation of this play and led to the creation of a new Canadian theatre collective with Leah Cherniak and Laura Philipps called Fire and Rescue Team.

Fire and Rescue Team brings improvisation, Blind imaginings, physical theatre, profound absurdity, and play to this production of *Perceptual Archaeology (or How To Travel Blind)*. We have imagined both Blind and sighted audiences throughout our creation process and continue to question what it means to decentre visuality in the process of telling stories and making theatre. We are joined by associate producer Megan Wilk to continue decentering vision online with our Blind-led digital art space www.perceptualarchaeology.com.

Fire and Rescue Team has been developing *Perceptual Archaeology (or How To Travel Blind)* in partnership with Crow's Theatre since 2021.

SPECIAL THANKS AND FUNDERS

Perceptual Archaeology (or How To Travel Blind) was made possible with our development team:
Workshop Stage Managers Dylan Tate-Howarth and Sasha Tate-Howarth
Workshop Line Feeders and Performers Kwaku Adu-Poku and Steven Hao
Workshop Sound Associate Olivia Wheeler
Workshop Technical Director Harrison Bye
Sound Mentee George Quarcoo

Thank you to our advisory team Karoline Bourdeau, Deborah Gold, Cate Cochran and Peter Thillaye. Thank you to Michael Achtman for being Alex's travel companion. Thank you to Diane Laundy and Peter Coffman. Thank you to Common Boots Theatre for development funding.

COMPANY BIOGRAPHIES

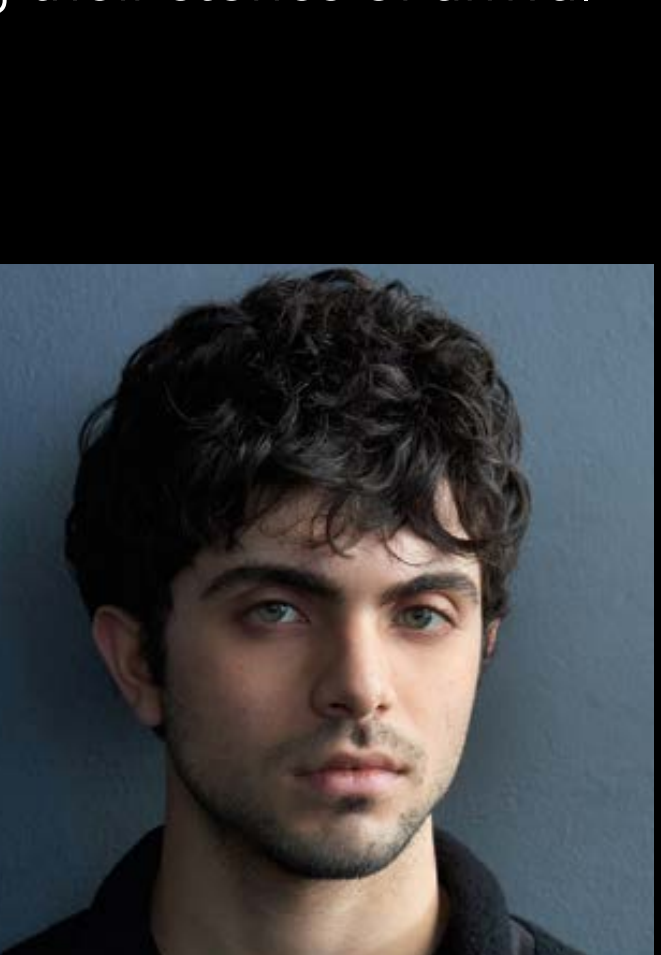
ALEX BULMER
WRITER AND PERFORMER

Alex is an award-winning writer, theatre maker, actor, and educator. Named one of the most influential disabled artists by UK's *Power Magazine*, Alex has thirty years experience across theatre, film, television, radio, and education. She is fuelled by a curiosity of the improbable and deeply informed by her experience of becoming Blind.

With an initial classical theatre training, she found a passion for the unexpected through working with disabled artists, queer artists, and those within the criminal justice system. Alex has established a groundbreaking new works programme for disabled artists with Graeae Theatre in the UK, founded Cripping The Stage with the British Council, Invisible Flash in the UK, and co-founded Fire and Rescue Team in Canada.

Recently, Alex created *May I Take Your Arm* with Re Define Arts, played Friar Laurence in *R +J* at the Stratford Festival, and was lead curator for CoMotion Festival, an international disability arts festival with Harbourfront Centre.

LEAH CHERNIAK
DIRECTOR



Leah is a director, actor and educator with 35+ years experience forging theatrical innovation in Canada. Her approach to directing and devising combines dramaturgy, poetic text, and an attentiveness to the physical theatrical worlds within any story. In Toronto, together with Martha Ross, they created over 30 new Canadian plays and adaptations of classical texts. Leah has also directed throughout Canada, including The National Arts Centre, Soulpepper Theatre, Tarragon Theatre, Factory Theatre and many more. She was an associate artist with Soulpepper Theatre for 10 years, and associate director of its academy. Leah taught clown at Toronto Metropolitan University for 20 years and teaches clown and directing at The University of Toronto. She's also worked annually for The Shoe Project, coaching immigrant and refugee women in presenting their stories of arrival in Canada.

ENZO MASSARA
LINE FEEDER AND PERFORMER

Enzo is overjoyed to be Alex's line feeder, and to get to work alongside such a passionate and dedicated company. To be in this room and watch these artists work, and experiment, and play has been a dream. He is honoured to join in all the fun. Prior to this, Enzo has been featured in *Slip* (Roku Channel, 2023), and the *Christmas Spirit* (2023), and in the future you can find him in a black shirt and apron at Blu Ristorante nearly every day of the week. Enzo loves this play dearly, and everyone involved in it. It has been a great pleasure participating in Alex's master class in perseverance, self love, and seeing better with one's feet.

DEANNA H. CHOI
(SHE/HER)
SOUND DESIGNER

Deanna is a theatrical sound designer, film composer, classically-trained violinist, educator, and cat/dog lover. She has designed soundscapes and sound systems for over 80 theatrical productions from coast to coast and is an associate artist with the National Theatre School of Canada. Proud member of IATSE ADC 659. Her yellow fever cabaret, *LOVE YOU WRONG TIME*, co-created and performed with Maddie Bautista, premiered in April 2023. Recent Theatre credits include: *A Wrinkle in Time* (Stratford Festival), *The Darkest Dark* (YPT), *Things I Know to Be True* (Company Theatre/Mirvish); *Cockroach* (Tarragon); *Bad Parent* (Soulpepper). Film & TV credits include: *Relax, I'm From the Future*; *CBC's The Nature of Things; Last of the Right Whales*. www.splitbrainsound.com @deanna.h.choi

THOMAS RYDER PAYNE
SOUND DESIGNER

Thomas Ryder Payne is a composer and sound designer for theatre, dance and film. Selected past theatre work includes designs for Stratford, Shaw, Mirvish, Soulpepper, CanStage, Tarragon, Factory, TPM, YPT, Crows, Modern Times, Aluna, BIBT, Theatre Gargantua, Nightwood, Toronto Dance Theatre, NAC, Centaur, Theatre Calgary, GCTC, RMTC and many others. Thomas has received 6 Dora awards.

VICTORIA WALLACE
SET, PROPS, AND COSTUMES DESIGNER

Victoria is a Toronto based designer whose work has been seen across Canada. She has received two Dora Awards for outstanding costume design. Select credits include costume design for *The Doll's House, The Barber of Seville, Endgame* (Soulpepper), *The Coyotes* (Caravan Farm Theatre), *Peace in our Time* (Shaw Festival) and others. Set and costume design credits include *Every Brilliant Thing, Twelfth Night* (Canadian Stage), *Les Miserables* (Theatre Smith-Gilmour) as well as numerous productions for The Blyth Festival, Theatre Columbus, YPT and others.

DAVID DEGROW
LIGHTING DESIGNER

Dave is a designer, production manager and teacher working in Toronto. He has been part of some 400 productions across Canada, and his designs have been nominated for three Dora awards. Dave recently completed his PhD at the University of Toronto where his research focussed on the design and function of theatre venues in Toronto. He is a founding member of the Means of Production Collective.

SARAH YUEN
SET, PROPS, AND COSTUMES ASSISTANT DESIGNER

Sarah Yuen is a neurodivergent/disabled, bi/pan, Chinese Canadian set and costume designer and visual artist based in the GTA. She is particularly interested in exploring work created by artists with minority identities, especially those at the intersections of multiple identities. As an emerging disabled designer, she hopes to explore and introduce greater understanding and implementation of disability politics and care-centred practices in theatre spaces. Her most recent credits include head of props for *Niizh* (Native Earth), set/costume design assistant for *Behind The Moon* (Tarragon Theatre), costume designer/head of props for *Between a Wok and a Hot Pot* (Cahoots Theatre), props assistant for *The First Stone* (New Harlem Productions), and design assistant for Guild Festival Theatre's 2022 season. Sarah hopes to eventually have as many adventures and simple epiphanies as Alex does. Find her on Instagram @sarahmakingthings :)

LORNA CRAIG
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR AND SCRIPT COORDINATOR

Lorna Craig is a disabled theatre creator who primarily works in community engaged spaces. She spent three years on the White Rabbit Arts board where she facilitated arts residencies at Red Clay Farm in Nova Scotia. While studying theatre and development in Montreal, she directed *On Life and Living*, a documentary theatre piece based on personal stories from AIDS Community Care Montreal, an HIV/AIDS support network. She coordinated a research project at Concordia called *Encounters* which used theatre practice to explore cultural differences. Back in Toronto she directed *Living with Olivia Cadence Donovan*, an original production about the experience of living with OCD. She has spent the last three years working with AccessART to improve the accessibility of public art throughout Toronto. Lorna is delighted to be working on this project and is grateful for the space to explore themes of disability and blindness. Picture of Lorna Craig taken by Lorna herself.

DR. JESSICA WATKIN
DISABILITY DRAMATURG

Dr. Jess Watkin finished her PhD at the University of Toronto's Centre for Drama, Theatre, and Performance studies. Her research focuses on Disability dramaturgy, care-full approaches to performance creation/production, and Disability related activism. She is a Blind artist-scholar living in Toronto, who loves making tactile art and showing up as the Disabled artist in many creative spaces to ensure care is prioritized for all. Image of Dr. Jessica Watkin taken by Kevin Bryan.

BECKY GOLD
OFFSTAGE CREATIVE ENABLER

Becky Gold is a Toronto-based theatre practitioner specializing in accessible and collaborative creation practices and is currently in the final stages of completing her PhD in Theatre and Performance Studies at York University. Her research explores interabled artistic collaboration with a focus on interdependence, relation-building, and access intimacy in the creation process. Her work on these topics has been published in *Journal of Public Pedagogies*, *Frontiers: A Journal of Women Studies*, *Studies in Social Justice*, *Canadian Theatre Review*, and *Interdependent Magic*, a collection of plays and interviews by, for, and about Disabled theatre artists. Becky has been working with Alex Bulmer as a creative enabler since 2018. Previous creative enabler credits include: *May I Take Your Arm?* (ReDefine Arts), *Postcards from My Balcony* and *The Election* (Common Boots Theatre). Becky hopes this show prompts audiences to think about how we can embrace care and interdependence on stage and off.

LAURA PHILIPPS
PRODUCER

Laura Philipps is a Toronto-based producer and production manager of theatre, dance, and multimedia works. She is a member of the Means of Production collective, advocating for production managers and technical directors, and developing community workshops such as *Manifesting Core Values in Production*. Recent Credits Include: producer of *Henry G20* for Luminato Festival and The Bentway Conservancy, first assistant director of *Content Farm* for Substance Ranch; production manager of *Anahita's Republic* for Bustle and Beast; producer of *Sadhana/Tarana* for Pratibha Arts. www.lauraphilipps.com.

MEGAN WILK
ASSOCIATE PRODUCER

Megan Wilk is a mad, fat, queer, neurodivergent, second generation settler residing, with gratitude, in Tkarón:to, Treaty 13 territory. They are an arts administrator, producer, support worker, creative enabler, and interdisciplinary artist who focuses on disability and 2SLGBTQIA+ advocacy, size inclusivity, and consent-based practices. Through their work with emerging and established artists and arts organizations, Wilk has furthered their dedication to building and sustaining relationships and practices of care and interdependence. Wilk is the program & access coordinator at ReDefine Arts and a core member of the Fire and Rescue Team, the creators behind the theatre production *Perceptual Archaeology (or How To Travel Blind)* and the companion piece *Perceptual Archaeology: A Blind-led Digital Art Space*. Favourite and recent projects: *Trace* (2023), *Unscripted: KINSHIP* (2022), *Renfrew County Inquest Public Art Response* (2022), *The Countdown Public Art Project* (2016-2023). Upcoming projects: *The Pathways of Resistance Arts Festival* (2023). Headshot image description: portrait of Megan in front of a wall of leaves. They have brown shoulder length curly hair and are wearing glasses with rose tinted lenses and a tan button down shirt.

SALLY ROBERTS
PRODUCTION MANAGER

Sally Roberts is a freelance production manager and a member of Means of Production Collective. She also works as a technician and member of IATSE local 58 and local 873, primarily in lighting. Previously, she was the head technician of the Baillie Theatre at Canadian Stage for four years, and was production manager on *The Black Drum*, produced by Canadian Cultural Society for the Deaf (CCSD), with the support of Soulpepper Theatre. Occasionally, she moonlights as a lighting designer for T.Y.T. Theatre's family-friendly shows at Wychwood Theatre. In September, Sally will start her third year of the ASL-English Interpreting program at George Brown College. Sally is grateful to have started with *Perceptual Archaeology* in the early workshop days, and so excited to have been part of its evolution into the show you'll experience today. Enjoy.
Photo of Sally Roberts by Dahlia Katz.

NEHA ROSS
STAGE MANAGER

Neha Ross is a Stage Manager currently working and residing in Tkaronto. Since graduating in 2008 from Theatre Tech at Sheridan Collage she has worked for various theatre companies across Canada. Neha's love for the theatre and community has taken her across India, Canada and America with new Works. Born and raised in Sharjah, United Arab Emirates of Indian descent is now proud to call Canada home. Selected credits included: stage manager - *Mahabharata* (Why Not Theatre and Shaw Festival), *Prince Hamlet*, *ICELAND* (Why Not Theatre), *Kamloopa*, *Bad Parent*, *Animal Farm*, *27 Club* (Soulpepper Theatre); *Mixtape* (Crow's Theatre); *We Are Proud to Present...* (Theatre Centre); *Other Side of the Game* (Cahoots Theatre and Obsidian Theatre); *One Thing Leads to Another* (Young Peoples Theatre); *People Power* (Carlos Bulosan). Assistant Stage Manager - *R + J* (Stratford Festival), *Kim's Convenience* (Soulpepper Theatre); *The Birds and the Bees*, *The Wilberforce Hotel*, and *Mary's Wedding* (Blyth Festival); *Lady in the Red Dress* (fu-GEN).

RIVER OLIVEIRA
SOUND TECHNICIAN

River is a disabled, queer, and trans multi-disciplinary artist, technician, and facilitator based in Toronto, Ontario. He has worked as a technician, sound designer, and composer for theatre, film, and digital performances across the city. River finds the most joy in working on stories that celebrate and amplify joy in queer, disabled, and trans communities. His most recent credits include *Access Me* (composer and sound designer, Boys in Chairs Collective), *The Darkest Dark* (assistant sound design, Young People's Theatre), *The First Stone* (associate sound design, New Harlem Productions/GCTC), *Cockroach* 甲由 (assistant sound design, Tarragon Theatre). Along with his collaborator Max Cameron Fearon, River is currently co-creating *How The Wolf Says Goodnight* - a multi-media, non-naturalistic exploration of queer relationship narratives, with generous support from the OAC's Recommender Grant program. For more information about what he is up to, you can visit him at riveroliveira.com. Headshot Credit: David Fulde.

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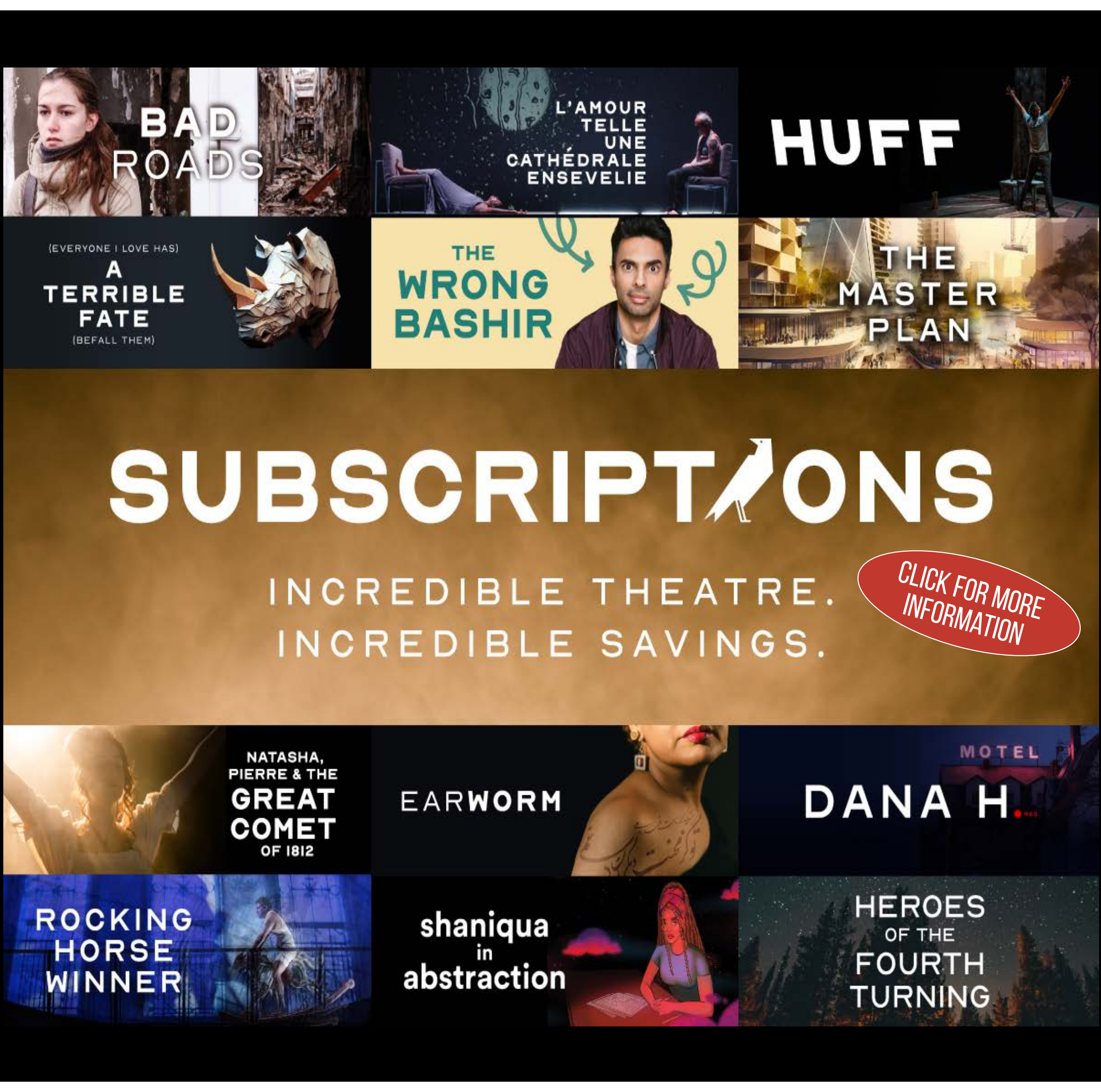
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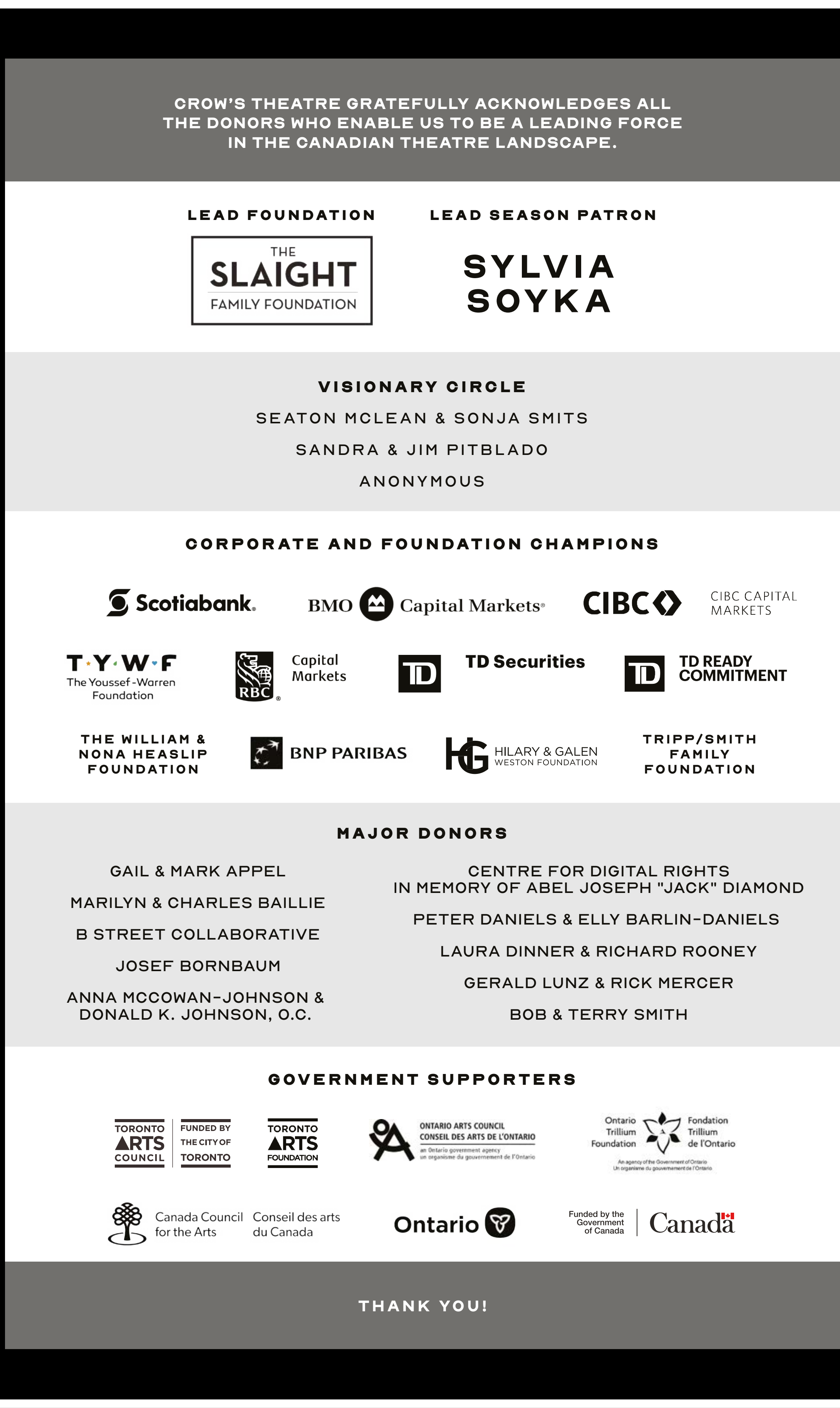

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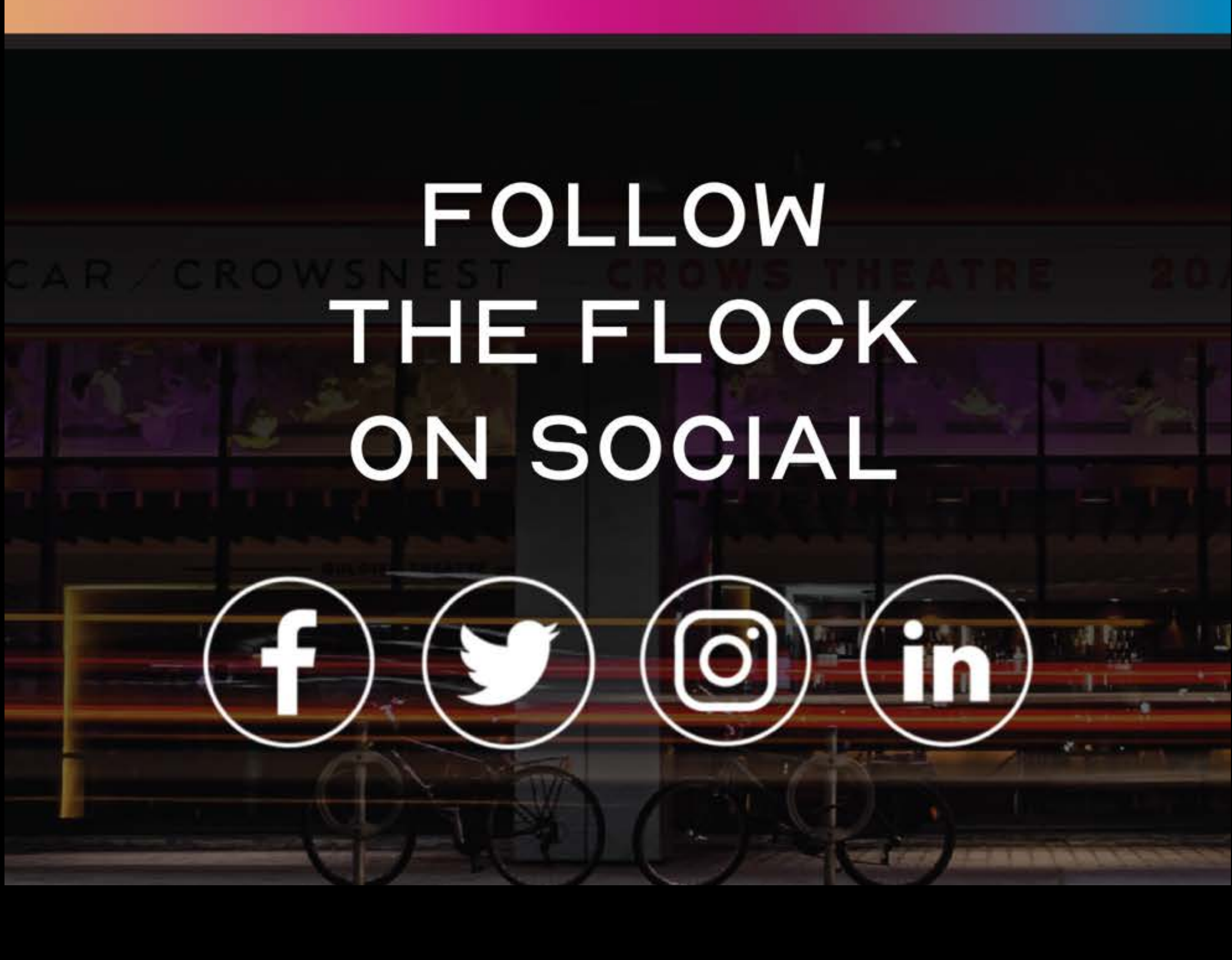CROW'S
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