2019 • WHERE THE FUTURE OF THEATRE BEGINS

# Paprika

## THEATRE FESTIVAL

# AT A GLANCE

# WELCOME TO THE FUTURE!

Welcome to the 18th annual **Paprika Festival** presented in partnership with Native Earth Performing Arts.

We believe the young artists whose work you're about to see represent the future leaders and theatremakers of Tkaronto and beyond.

Paprika Festival runs year round professional training and mentorship programs that culminate in a performing arts festival of new work by young artists. You're at the Festival now - miigwech/thank you for coming! It's taken the better part of the year for the participants to bring you this work.

Young artists apply to one of six program: **Productions Program, Playwrights Unit, Creators Unit, Directors Lab, Indigenous Arts Program** or the **Festival Administrators Program.** They work with professional mentors and facilitators to create the work you are about to see.

All Paprika programs are free of cost for the participants.
At Paprika, we believe in accessibility, artistic development, youth leadership and community.
We strive to give young artists autonomy over their work while supporting them every step of the way.

# LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The Paprika community is committed to the ongoing and complex journey of the constant work of shifting perspectives and practices.

We operate from offices, houses, apartments, and coffee shops across the city of Tkaronto (Toronto) and beyond.
We are so grateful to call this land home.

We acknowledge the ancestral lands and waterways of the Anishinaabe (Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation), Haudenosaunee Peoples from the Six Nations Confederacy of the Grand River, the Wendat and any other Nations who cared for the land. Acknowledged and unacknowledged, recorded and unrecorded. Past, present and future.

We understand that recognition and gratitude alone on the part of settlers is not enough when it comes to rectifying and healing from generations of injustice and violence against the Indigenous peoples of this land. Now is a time for education, dialogue, and action.

# A NOTE FROM ALI & DANIEL

Being 18 is a weird time. You're suddenly faced with a myriad of decisions you think will shape the rest of your life and you're suddenly pressured to define your place in the world. It can be stressful, confusing, scary and isolating.

It can also be a time of growth, courage, and self-learning.

Over the past 18 years, Paprika has established itself as the home of the emerging artist. Every year, we've seen artists grow and develop their craft, learn about their values and what they stand for, and courageously present themselves and their ideas within a welcoming community of mentors, collaborators, and supporters.

All of this begins in the moment when a young artist walks into the Theatre Passe Muraille office for their Paprika interview. They see a colourful hive of desks, our corner of ambitious sticky-notes, and a table of Paprika staff and mentors waiting to meet them. In short, they see people, space, and resources being assembled because of something they are making.

That's a feeling of belonging.
That's powerful.

More than ever, we are committed to creating a space of belonging, of acceptance, and of assuring you that you are in the right place.

Bilal Baig (past participant, current program facilitator) once said Paprika was the very first "yes" they got as an artist. In a word, our mission is: YES.

Yes, you are an artist.
Yes, you're making something important.
And yes, we can help you.

Now, we've reached the part where what these artists have made suddenly leaps beyond them into the world. It can be scary. It can be empowering.

This year's Festival offers stories of love, healing, forgiveness, resilience, protest, and finding one's place in the world. Above all, these are stories of power. The power of taking control of your life and moving through this world headstrong.

Fitting for our 18th year.

So, welcome to the leap.
Welcome to a glimpse into the future.

Thank you for joining us.

**Ali Joy Richardson**
**Artistic Producer**

**Daniel Carter**
**General Manager**

# THE PEOPLE BEHIND PAPRIKA

## STAFF

**Artistic Producer:** Ali Joy Richardson
**General Manager:** Daniel Carter
**Artistic Programs Manager:** Polly Phokeev
**Communications Manager:** John Wamsley
**Training Day Facilitator:** Sabah Haque
**Lead Festival Administrator:** Hana El Niwairi
**Production Manager:** Taylor Young
**Indigenous Arts Program Producer:** Tyler J Sloane
**Lighting Designer:** Steph Raposo
**Intern Lighting Designer:** Chris Belc
**Backstage Coordinator:** Aimee Poulin
**Festival Photography:** Henry Chan

## BOARD

Daniel Pink (Chair)
Adam Gomes (Treasurer)
Katie Saunoris (Secretary)
Lois Adamson
Naz Afsahi
Alayna Kolodziechuk
Brandon Lablong
Elizabeth Sheffield

# MENTORS AND FACILITATORS

## CREATORS UNIT

Bilal Baig (Facilitator)

## DIRECTORS LAB

Courtney Ch'ng Lancaster (Facilitator)

## FESTIVAL ADMINISTRATORS PROGRAM

Hana El Niwairi (Facilitator)

## INDIGENOUS ARTS PROGRAM

Michaela Washburn (Facilitator)
Veronica Johnny (Advisor)
Falen Johnson (Dramaturge)

## PLAYWRIGHTS UNIT

Polly Phokeev (Co-Facilitator)
Jeff Ho (Co-Facilitator)

## PRODUCTIONS PROGRAM

Julie Tepperman (Mentor)
Audrey Dwyer (Mentor)

# TICKETS

**Pay-What-You-Can-Afford Sliding Scale:** $5/$10/$20 (online or at the door)
**Pay-What-You-Can:** any amount (at the door)
**Pay-It-Forward Tickets:** $7 (online)

These tickets allow patrons to buy a ticket for someone else to attend the Festival at no cost. Any Pay-It-Forward tickets that are purchased will be available at the door on a first come, first served basis.

# BOX OFFICE

Aki Studio (First floor)
Native Earth Performing Arts
585 Dundas Street E.
Toronto, ON M5A 2B7
Online: nativeearth.ca
Phone: 416.531.1402 (Mon-Fri 10am-5pm)
E-Mail: boxoffice@nativeearth.ca

# SAGE

Sage is one of the four sacred medicines commonly used by Indigenous peoples of this area. The other three sacred medicines are cedar, sweetgrass and tobacco. Sage will be available just inside the Aki Studio doors after all performances. If you are unsure of how to use Sage and/or would like to learn more about it, please reach out to a Paprika volunteer. Miigwech/Thank you.

# ACCESSIBILITY

Native Earth Performing Arts and Artscape strive to provide equal treatment to and equitable benefits of its services, programs and facilities in a manner that respects the dignity and independence of people with disabilities.

- The Dundas Street entrance provides barrier-free access to the building.
- Two elevators are located in the South Lobby.
- All floors have accessible washrooms and stalls, as well as accessible drinking fountains.
- Signage throughout the building is written in Braille.
- A hearing enhancement system is available in the Aki Studio.
- Accessible seating in the Aki Studio.
- Late admittance and re-entry allowed.

# GET INVOLVED

We provide year-round theatre training and mentorship. At the end of the year in May, your original work is showcased in the weeklong, fully-produced, uncensored Paprika Festival. **Paprika Festival is free for all participants.**

Programs begin in November. Applications will open in July - keep an eye on our website and social media, or email create@paprikafestival.com for more information.

We want to make this work for you (so that you can make your work!). Paprika is committed to accessibility. If you need assistance with your application in any way please don't hesitate to contact us. Paprika Festival is an equal opportunity organization and strongly encourages applications from Indigenous, culturally diverse applicants and any equity seeking group, including but not limited to race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, or disability status.

A note on ages: At Paprika the core age group is 16-21 years for all programs excluding the Directors Lab & Indigenous Arts Program (16-30 years) and the Festival Administrators Program (21-25 years). We're interested in making exceptions to this for younger people with a specific need for more advanced training and for older people who are new to the arts.

# DONATE

By donating to Paprika, you are joining a network of dedicated supporters who understand the importance of fostering creativity in young people and supporting the next generation of artists.

You can donate here at the Festival's Welcome Table or officially (including tax receipts) at **paprikafestival.com/support**.

# WELCOME TO NATIVE EARTH

Native Earth Performing Arts is Canada's oldest professional Indigenous theatre company. Currently in its 35th year, Native Earth is dedicated to creating, developing, and producing professional artistic expression of the Indigenous experience in Canada. Through stage productions (theatre, dance, and multidisciplinary art), new script development, apprenticeships, and internships, Native Earth seeks to fulfill a community of artistic visions.

Native Earth is proud to partner with Paprika Festival for the fourth year to bring this youth-led performing arts festival to Aki Studio. Through this partnership, Native Earth and Paprika Festival offer barrier-reduced programs and spaces for Indigenous youth to participate in theatre, while offering opportunities for young people of all backgrounds to engage in cross-cultural dialogue.

## STAFF

**Artistic Director:** Keith Barker
**Managing Director:** Isaac Thomas
**Artistic Associate:** Lisa Nasson
**Venue Coordinator:** Bryan-Clifford Batty
**Marketing Coordinator:** Mirae Lee
**Patron Services Coordinator:** Alexander Franks
**Patron Services Representatives:** Jessica Bowmer, Rebecca Cuddy, Sophie Dow, Chanakya Mukherjee, Joelle Peters, Elizabeth Staples, Kaitlynn Tomaselli
**Administrative Assistant:** Chanakya Mukherjee

## BOARD

Georgia Quartaro, Migiziw (Bob) Crawford, Lizz Arger, Jacqueline Nunes

@NATIVEEARTHPERFORMINGARTS @NATIVEEARTH

# A NOTE FROM KEITH BARKER

Our history lives in our bodies. The stories of those who came before us are layered in our DNA.

The next generation of artists tell our stories back to us and remind us of who we are and where we came from.

They keep us connected in a world that is determined to isolate, and distract us.

Native Earth is honoured to continue our partnership with the Paprika Festival and to celebrate the next generation of storytellers.

All my relations.

**Keith Barker**
**Artistic Director, Native Earth Performing Arts**

# OUR SUPPORTERS

## FUNDERS

Canada Council for the Arts
Conseil des Arts du Canada

ONTARIO ARTS COUNCIL
CONSEIL DES ARTS DE L'ONTARIO
an Ontario government agency
un organisme du gouvernement de l'Ontario

TORONTO ARTS COUNCIL

## FESTIVAL PARTNER

Native Earth Performing Arts Inc.

## FESTIVAL SPONSOR

RBC Foundation

## COMPANY IN RESIDENCE

Theatre Passe Muraille

## PROGRAM PARTNERS

TD

IndigenEd

LIVE

THE HOWLAND COMPANY

## PRINTING PARTNER

eva's PRINT SHOP

## PRESENTING PARTNERS

tft théâtre français de toronto

WORKMAN ARTS

NightwoodTheatre

Little Black Afro THEATRE COMPANY

OBSIDIAN THEATRE COMPANY

THE MUSICAL STAGE CO.

## COMMUNITY AND INDUSTRY PARTNERS

THE TORONTO FRINGE

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO FACULTY OF ARTS & SCIENCE
Centre for Drama, Theatre & Performance Studies

FACTORY

ARTISTS MENTORING YOUTH

panago FRESH PIZZA

# THANK YOU!

AMY Project, Mark Aikman, Luke Brown, Canadian Stage, Julius Cho, Factory Theatre, fu-GEN Theatre, Ga Ting Toronto Collective/ Next Stage Theatre Festival, Nick Green, Howland Company, Aaron Jan, Courtney Ch'ng Lancaster, Jane Marsland, Adam Matheson, Leslie McCue, Weyni Mengesha, Native Earth Performing Arts, Nina Lee Aquino, Paradigm Productions, Rachel Penny, Luke Reece, Rogers Communications, Roseneath Theatre, Anusree Roy, Nikki Shaffeeullah, Tarragon Theatre, Theatre Passe Muraille, Toronto Fringe, Geneviève Trottier , Aaron Willis, Renee Wong, Young Associates, Samantha Zimmerman

**Thank you to our community of donors:**

Lois Adamson, Naz Afsahi, Michael Albert, Simon Andrews, Lindsay Arseneau, Leah Babins, Claudia Barrios, Kathleen Bartlett, Shaun Bernstein, Aimee Bouchard, David Brock, Briana Brown, Daniel Caplan, Candice Chambers, Marjie Chud, Louis Covens, Benson Cowan, Susan Coyne, Ashley D'Andrea, Amber Ebert, Deanna Galati, Karen Gilodo, Adam Gomes, Patricia Grieco, Ilana Harendorf, Nida Haroon, Michael Harrison, Meghan Henry, Kirsten Hering, Roni Hoffman, Hannah Jack, Christophe Jackman, Jonathan Katz, Alix Kempf, Rob Kempson, Brandon Lablong, Maggie Lauzon, Marc Levy, Sallie Lyons, Annie MacKay, Chris Mark, Nick May, Nathan McBride, Andy & Marilyn McKim, Aidan Morishita-Miki, Andrew Myers, Curtis Norman, Gail Packwood, Daniel Pink, Jim Quick, Michelle Ramsay, Ali Joy Richardson, Andrea Richardson, Kathleen Richardson, Breanne Ritchie, Anusree Roy, Katie Saunoris, Justine Scilipoti, Elizabeth Sheffield, Lauren Sheffield, Rachel Sheps, Lindsay Short, Rosamund Small, Petya Smit, Ali Sultani, Peter Wismath, Jaclyn Zaltz, Aliza Zigler, Rhonda Zwingerman

# LET'S GET STARTED

# FESTIVAL SCHEDULE

## MONDAY MAY 20th

**7:00pm**

DOUBLE BILL:

*Session*

*སྒྲོལ་མ[Dolma]*

DIRECTORS LAB

**9:30pm**

*How We Breathe*

PRODUCTIONS PROGRAM

## TUESDAY MAY 21st

**7:00pm**

*Did You Miss Me?*

TD CREATORS UNIT

**9:30pm**

*Heresy*

PRODUCTIONS PROGRAM

## WEDNESDAY MAY 22nd & THURSDAY MAY 23rd

**7:00pm**

DOUBLE BILL:

*Heresy*

*How We Breathe*

PRODUCTIONS PROGRAM

# FRIDAY MAY 24th

**7:00pm**

DOUBLE BILL:

*[Dolma]*

*Session*

DIRECTORS LAB

**9:30pm**

*Did You Miss Me?*

TD CREATORS UNIT

# SATURDAY MAY 25th

*PRE SHOW PANEL DISCUSSION*

**3:00pm**

DOUBLE BILL:

*Kisâkihitin/Gizaagin*

*Firestarter*

INDIGENOUS ARTS PROGRAM

**7:30pm**

*Niish*

INDIGENOUS ARTS PROGRAM

# SUNDAY MAY 26th

**1:00pm**

*Carving Home*: Reading Series

*Uncharted*

*FEAR OF MEN*

*Made in China*

*Maryam's Hijrah*

PLAYWRIGHTS UNIT

**4:30pm**

*Did You Miss Me?*

TD CREATORS UNIT

# TD CREATORS UNIT

**TD CREATORS UNIT** is a home for poets, musicians, dancers, actors, directors, playwrights, designers and anyone who is interested in being part of a tight-knit creative team. The collectively-created piece made by the TD Creators Unit can take any form the group envisions. This is a place to take artistic risks, experiment with ideas, and try things you've been imagining. A professional artist-facilitator guides the group from first ideas to opening night.

**THIS PROGRAM IS SUPPORTED THROUGH TD BANK.**

# MENTORS AND FACILITATORS

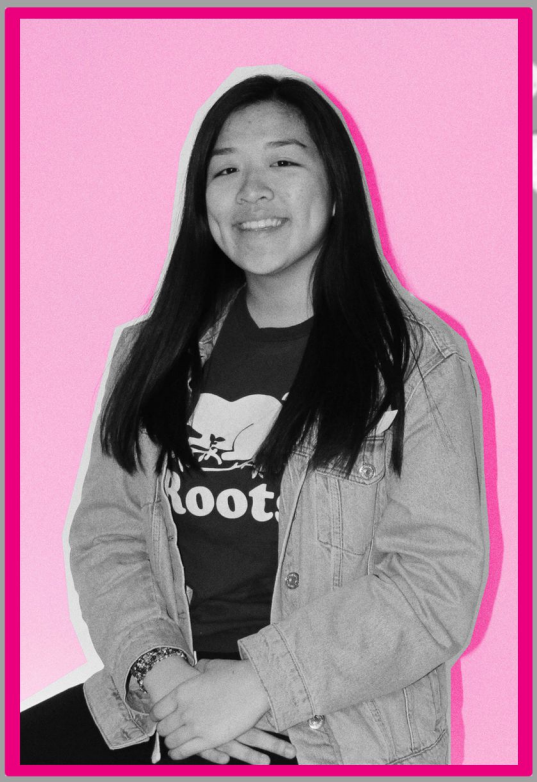
## BILAL BAIG | TD CREATORS UNIT FACILITATOR

"Personally, I learned from this experience that if I know I'm about to do something that's hard or scary, I should do something fun and relaxing right before. So simple, so true, so helpful. This year taught me how important it is to let your mentees know (over and over again) that you are now a life-long resource for them, and that is not a burden at all, but an honour."

# NAOMI BACHAN

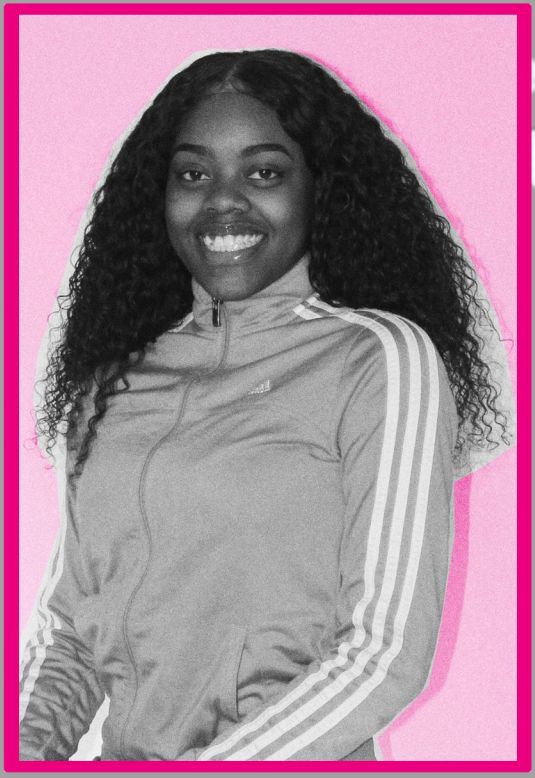
**NAOMI BACHAN** is a creator. She is passionate about film and wants to see more comedic theatre. She is most proud of the short film she made with friends called *Baby Hands*, and the original musical she wrote called *Juvenile*. Her next step is to go to university, and she hopes to one day become a professional filmographer.

# BETTY LAI



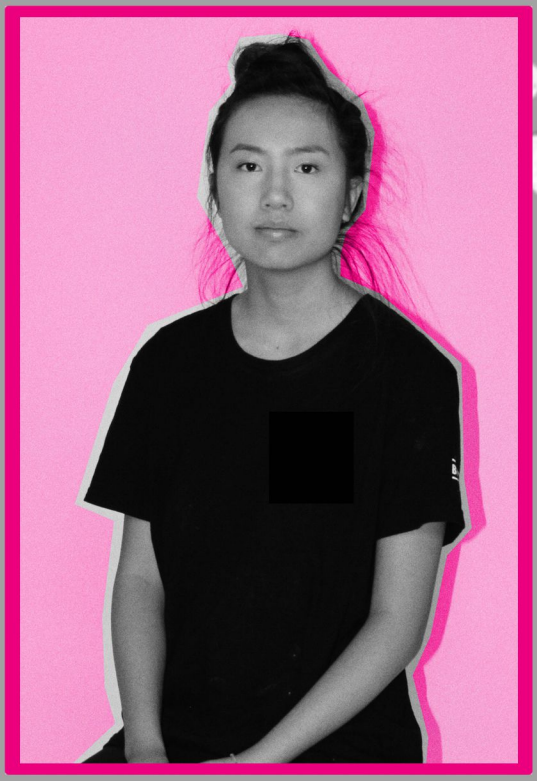

**BETTY LAI** is an actress. She is passionate about everything arts related! She loves acting, theatre and is really into film. Her next steps as an artist are to further involve herself with the theatre world. She's most proud of her role as Publicity Head for her school show this year. "I had so much fun creating and running an Instagram page, making buttons, and designing graphics. It was a really amazing feeling when people said they liked what I was doing. I'm also very proud of the play that I'm acting in for drama class right now. I love rehearsing for it because it's just so much fun!"

# KENDRA MICHEL



**KENDRA MICHEL** is an actress and dreamer. She is passionate about living her life with no regrets. Kendra is most proud of recently finishing a performance at her school for a competition. "The creation process was hard and I'm very proud we completed it." She one day hopes to travel the world.

# CYNTHIA SU



**CYNTHIA SU** is an actress and poet. Her next steps as an artist are to expand her range as an actor and her experiences as an artist. Cynthia wants to make theatre more accessible to younger people and people from ethnic minorities. "I want the theatre we see to reflect the lives we live." Last year, she was part of the collective creation *Lost and Found*, performed at the National Theatre School Festival. She also wrote a poem detailing a retired teacher's experience of World War II and is very proud of its relation between "reality" and "art". She wants to create something that makes every part of life worth living. Whatever may take her to that place, she would love to do.

# DID YOU MISS ME?

*I ran away.*

*I want to be alone.*

*It's a choice to protect myself.*

*I've been waiting for you to notice me.*

A collectively created theatre piece by four young artists exploring self-purpose, dependency, restraint, and the afterlife. Join these lost souls as they investigate the impact they have on this world and what it means to truly be missed.

**CREATORS/PERFORMERS:** Naomi Bachan, Betty Lai, Kendra Michel, and Cynthia Su

# DIRECTORS LAB

**THE DIRECTORS LAB** is geared toward new directors looking to develop their craft. Participants receive mentorship from a professional theatre company, participate in masterclasses with a professional director, and have their work showcased in the Festival. The training is tailored to the participants' interests and is a chance for experimentation with new directorial approaches and practices.

# MENTORS AND FACILITATORS

## COURTNEY CH'NG LANCASTER | DIRECTORS LAB FACILITATOR

"I think the Directors Lab creates an opportunity for participants to RISK being leaders. Directing can be such a product-focused role; it's wonderful to watch these emerging directors try this out with the understanding that failure absolutely IS an option. I think Paprika keeps young artists in the theatre ecology who might otherwise leave, due to lack of access, lack of opportunity, lack of inclusion. Paprika strives to remove barriers to accessing theatre training and opportunities. Even if these young artists don't go on to become theatre makers, I think and hope the empowerment Paprika offers them has a long-lasting impact."

# LAURA MEADOWS

**LAURA MEADOWS** is a director, writer, actor, collaborator and crazy dog lover! She is passionate about storytelling and recently performed in/collaborated on a production of *Crave* by Sarah Kane for the Toronto Fringe. "I am so passionate about bringing people together to tell a story. To bring light to stories or topics or opinions and exploring them. I want to give them a platform to be seen and not ignored or hidden away. To bring every different person we have in this wonderful city, country, and world together to connect with each other and understand each other's stories."

# SESSION

Delilah is an out-of-work actress turned dominatrix who loves her job. Doug is an out-of-work factory worker who is trying something new. Unbeknownst to Delilah, her dad is the Englishman in the blindfold handcuffed to the wall. Unbeknownst to Doug, his daughter is the Russian Domme with the whip. Their session is about to begin, whether they are ready for it or not. Session explores the first time we have adult conversations with our so called "perfect" parents as new and growing adults ourselves.

**PLAYWRIGHT:** Lindsey Middleton
**DRAMATURG:** Colette Habel
**STAGE MANAGER:** Jelena Sibalija
**LIGHTING DESIGNER:** Madison Marie Madhu
**FEATURING:** Lindsey Middleton and Peter Nelson
**THANK YOU TO:** John Wamsley, Ali Joy Richardson, Daniel Carter, and Courtney Ch'ng Lancaster
**HEADS UP!** Swearing, sexual and suggestive content/language, partial nudity

# RINCHEN DOLMA

**RINCHEN DOLMA** is a director, playwright and dramaturg. She is honoured and proud to have become the Artistic Director of the Made in Exile community-arts initiative and to have been selected to be part of the 2019 Paprika Festival. She is passionate about storytelling and learning about the ways it's rooted in all of our communities, histories and survival. She hopes to continue to look for training and experience in playwriting, directing and dramaturgy to strengthen her skills and grow as an artist/person. Her ultimate goal is to make her parents proud, make herself proud, and make art that brings joy to people.

# སྒྲོལ་མ་[DOLMA]

It's October 31, 1984. Delhi, India. Dolma dreads her everyday commute and her coworkers as she travels to her dream job, being the first in her family to work in an office. Her life alone in the big city is proving to not be as glamorous as she imagined having come from a small refugee settlement in the south and she tries to keep to herself. On this hot fall day, Dolma decides to stand up for herself, the same day that PM Indira Gandhi is assassinated.

**PLAYWRIGHT:** Rinchen Dolma
**STAGE MANAGER:** kumari giles
**FEATURING:** Tenzin Tsomo

**THANK YOU TO:** ཨ་མ་ལགས་, Tsomo, Marjorie Chan, Courtney Ch'ng Lancaster, and kumari giles
**HEADS UP!** *Dolma* is a piece that is still in discovery and development. This performance is multilingual and translation will not be offered.

# INDIGENOUS ARTS PROGRAM

# THE INDIGENOUS ARTS PROGRAM

provides personalized, flexible training and support to young Indigenous performing artists of any experience and skill level. We connect Indigenous youth with Indigenous artists and mentors who provide holistic artistic, emotional, and spiritual support. Program participants are provided the tools and guidance to create a fully original piece of performed art. Mentors and guest artists help connect program participants with community and the Indigenous arts scene in Tkaronto and beyond. Participants have the opportunity to return for a second year in this program to further develop their training and their original work and deepen their relationships with new collaborators and mentors in community.

THIS PROGRAM IS SUPPORTED THROUGH INDIGENED AND TO LIVE.

# MENTORS AND FACILITATORS

## MICHAELA WASHBURN | INDIGENOUS ARTS PROGRAM FACILITATOR

*[Your favourite thing you learned from a Paprika Participant this year]:* "Whenever I have the impulse to share advice, I am reminded of whether or not I am doing those things I am recommending."
*[Paprika's greatest contributions to the industry]:* "Supporting artists in their vision, their process and their creativity..but most importantly, reinforcing their worth!"

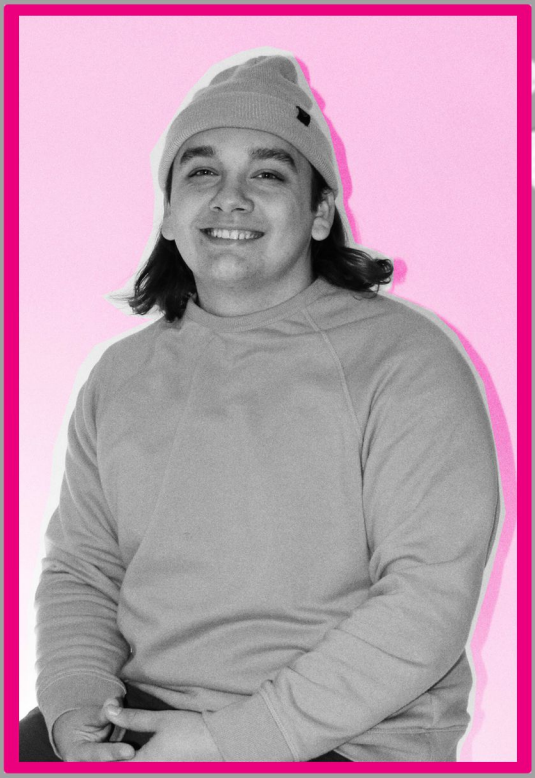
## VERONICA JOHNNY | INDIGENOUS ARTS PROGRAM ADVISOR

"I learned how to calmly support participants, without taking on their struggle, and just be fully present for them and be there to witness and support however I can. I learned how to truly open myself up to my own writing, in a way that I hadn't before, as a result of reading the works of our talented participants."

## FALEN JOHNSON | INDIGENOUS ARTS PROGRAM MENTOR

"I think Paprika gives participants a sense of community and support while developing new work which is so important. Isolation can be a real issue for creators and writers so having a community is so important. Paprika also helps participants to understand some basics of production which are frequently skills artists have to learn on their feet without any support. I think what I learned about being a mentor this year was about restraint. When to ask and when to hold back and let the artist find their own way."

# COLE FORREST



**COLE FORREST** is a filmmaker, a spoken word poet, and storyteller. A past achievement he is really proud of is receiving the Ken and Ann Watts Memorial Foundation Scholarship from the Sears (now NTS) Drama Festival. "It gave me hope and belief in myself that I hadn't had before, and helped push me to go after my dreams." He recently wrapped his final project for film school (as writer and director), called *Queenie*, and wants to see more experimental Indigenous theater that broadens our horizons of what Indigenous theater can be. Cole's ultimate goal is to lead his community towards the brightest future.

# FIRESTARTER

Declan and Mable are two teenagers from the same reserve. They're best friends, they hang out in the forest near the rez, and they shoot fire from the palms of their hands.
One night, they accidentally start a fire in the very forest in which they love to play. The fire grows and grows, until it threatens their community and everyone they care about.

**DIRECTOR/WRITER:** Cole Forrest
**STAGE MANAGER:** Michelle Mohammed
**LIGHTING DESIGNER:** Chris Belc

**THANK YOU TO:** Clayton Windatt
**HEADS UP!** Some swearing

# JESSE WABEGIJIG

**JESSE WABEGIJIG** is an Indigenous creator, working in all mediums. They are passionate about reinventing our stories and taking them out of the darkness that is called realism. "We need stories that highlight who we are and why we are different." Their next step as an artist is to produce more Indigenous work that shines light on our best qualities. They want to continue to see art generated by people who come from specific cultures that highlights how amazing they are in their individuality. Their ultimate life/career goal is to "give hope to younger me".

# THERESA CUTKNIFE

**THERESA CUTKNIFE** is an actor, writer, aspiring director, and stressed out penguin. She is passionate about chicken fingers, synth, Indigenous memes, and theatre. She is most proud of assistant directing Matthew Mackenzie's *After the Fire* at the Theatre Centre in January 2019. Her next steps as an artist are to graduate from the Centre for Indigenous Theatre and walk into the black abyss of post-graduation. Her ultimate life/career goal is to create art that changes landscapes and to become a badass Elder who can pass on all the wisdom she can to the youth.

# KISÂKIHITIN/GIZAAGIN

What is Indigenous love? What does it mean? To answer this, we must first know who we are. Follow us through different stories as we reimagine love within colonial spaces. This project aims to shine a light on the best parts of being indigenous. With the world focusing so much on trauma, hate, and the darkness of the world, now is the time for us to be the light.

**CREATORS/PLAYWRIGHTS:** Jesse Wabegijig & Theresa Cutknife
**DIRECTOR:** Lisa Nasson
**PROJECTIONS:** Samay Arcentales
**STAGE MANAGER:** Michelle Mohammed
**LIGHTING DESIGNER:** Chris Belc

**THANK YOU TO:** Centre for Indigenous Theatre, Clay and Paper, Brian Solomon, our fellow Indigenous Arts Program participants, as well as Jesse's mother Christine Collins who recently passed fighting cancer and the deadly MRSA superbug.
**HEADS UP!** Swearing and mentions of sexual violence

# JOELLE PETERS

**JOELLE PETERS** is an actor and writer, though she's curious about directing and singing (with a bit of ukulele playing). She is passionate about storytelling and self-expression. "I want to see honest theatre. Theatre that doesn't take itself too seriously but can still provoke serious reactions and start important conversations." Joelle is committed to honestly expressing herself (she currently has a solo piece in development) and continuing to tell impactful stories.

# NIISH

Neither Sam or Lenna were expecting much from another summer on the rez but sometimes, life has other plans. Told with heart, humour, and rez nicknames, *Niish* explores themes of love, loss, and healing within a family, a community, and oneself.

**PLAYWRIGHT:** Joelle Peters
**DRAMATURG:** Falen Johnson
**STAGE MANAGER:** Michelle Mohammed
**LIGHTING DESIGNER:** Chris Belc

**THANK YOU TO:** Miigwetch to my family, Native Earth, Michelle Ramsay and Millie Tom for their support!
**HEADS UP!** Some offensive language

# PLAYWRIGHTS UNIT

**THE PLAYWRIGHTS UNIT** focuses on the process of developing a script for the stage. We ask that playwrights bring us a project they are passionate about, whether it is a clearly outlined idea for a play, a full length draft ready to be workshopped, or anything in between. Paprika welcomes playwrights at all stages, from beginner to already-produced. Many young playwrights have gone on to have their scripts staged as full productions at Paprika and beyond as a result of the development support they received in this program.

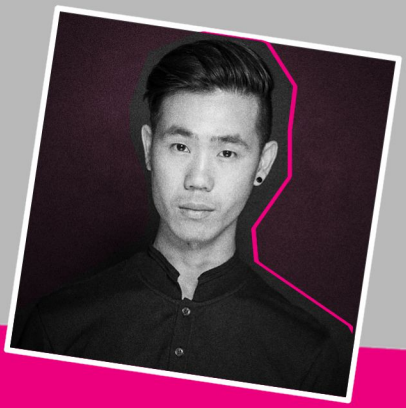
# MENTORS AND FACILITATORS

## JEFF HO | PLAYWRIGHTS UNIT CO-FACILITATOR

"The Playwrights Unit devotes itself to exploring all that is possible on stage, rendered on the page. It pairs playwrights with professional writers, and leads towards a reading of their newest work. This is an opportunity to question, clarify, and hone one's voice amongst a collaborative group. The direct proximity that participants have with the professional world provides a real opportunity to collaborate, dialogue, and experience multiple perspectives that tap right into the art across our Canadian stages."

## POLLY PHOKEEV | PLAYWRIGHTS UNIT CO-FACILITATOR

"It is so powerful to see a play be born and grow from an idea to something that is shared with audiences. It never ceases to amaze me how powerful the moment of sharing is - and I'm excited to get to partake in it with you! Paprika offers a space for experimentation, for messy questioning, and for professionally supported and uncensored creation that can be so powerful especially early in a career."



# KATHY MARTINEZ

**KATHY MARTINEZ** is a playwright and actress. She is passionate about theatre that gives a voice to the voiceless and addresses overlooked topics. As an artist, she hopes to further her theatrical career by continuing to produce her own work. She's most proud of receiving a Mira Award at the NTS Drama Festival for Original Artistic Research for her show, *Play Rights,* and taking part in the SummerWorks Festival with her play *O Nosso Fado*. In future, she plans to pursue further training with the National Theatre School, or attend law school.

# UNCHARTED

Separated by a curtain, Ava and Zachary face personal adversities as they learn to cope with life-altering illnesses. As one child experiences physical disease and the other a severe mental illness, they bond as one feels as if they're "losing their body" and the other, "their mind". A modern take on Dante's *The Divine Comedy*, *Uncharted* emphasizes the idea that although one is unable to control the inferno that may be their current reality, they can still control their perspective and will.

**MENTOR:** Erin Brubacher

**THANK YOU TO:** Ms. Sara Pedrosa, Journey To, Jessica Domingues

**HEADS UP!** Some swearing

# MERLIN SIMARD

**MERLIN SIMARD** is a bilingual and non-binary (they/them/theirs) performer and playwright. They want to see more inclusive theatre - theatre where diversity also includes trans and gender non-conforming voices. They are tired of the narrative that systematically excludes trans people because "we are rare, because there are fewer of us, because we are hard to find. Open your eyes. We are here. Cast us, produce us and celebrate us too. I dream of a theatre that overcomes tokenism and creates complex representation for everyone." Merlin is working towards opening up more opportunities for trans and genderqueer voices.

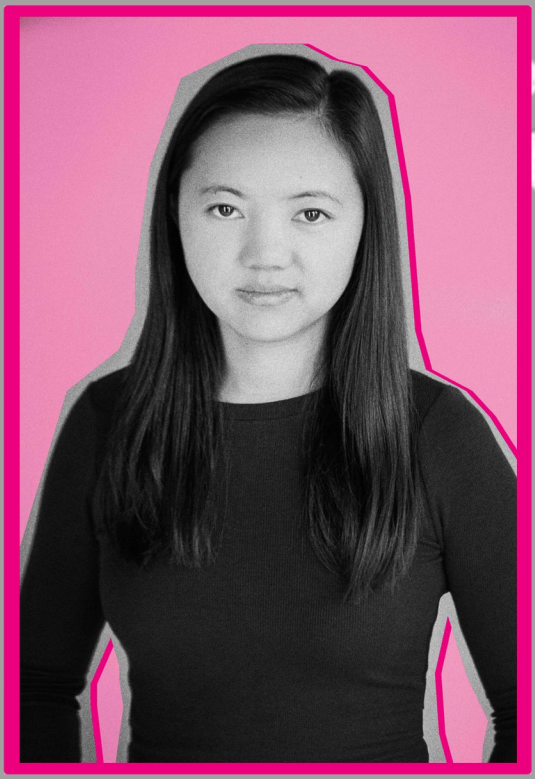
# FEAR OF MEN

What does sexism look like when no man is present? How does it affect trans and gender non-conforming communities? And most importantly: How do we move forward? *FEAR OF MEN* is a series of multilingual monologues that explore the pervasiveness of sexism across genders. At the height of gender-based violence, we have a duty to examine the ways in which we create oppression – consciously or not.

**MENTOR:** Bilal Baig
**DRAMATURG**: Keshia Palm & Joël Beddows

**THANK YOU TO:** Nick Green, Marie Driver
**HEADS UP!** Themes of sexual assault, physical violence, coarse language, drugs and sex

# CIANA HENDERSON



**CIANA HENDERSON** is a playwright and actor. She is passionate about trying new things that, at the same time, excite and scare her. As an artist, she hopes to continue workshopping *Made in China*. Ciana wants to see theatre that reflects more than one experience. Her ultimate life/career goal changes all the time. Today, she's pursuing work as a playwright and actor.

# MADE IN CHINA

In attempts to control China's rapid population growth, the One Child Policy was enforced by its government in 1979. Customary to the Chinese culture, boys were more valuable than girls, which left approximately 267 000 children adopted out to North American and European families. *Made in China* brings to life some of the voices affected by this movement: four girls, all abandoned at birth, but with stories as unique as their DNA. As their mid-twenties quickly approach, they urgently chase answers to questions they never knew they had. Equally frustrated and equally excited, they are bonded by the fact not one of them knows their chapters 1-4.

**MENTOR:** Charlotte Corbeil-Coleman

**THANK YOU TO:** Kailyn, Tia, Elyse and our parents. Thank you.

# LAITH AL-KINANI

**LAITH AL-KINANI** is an actor and theatre-maker. He is passionate about LOVE. He enjoys theatre that is physical, funny, multi-lingual and outdoors. He is most proud of *The Green Line* by Makram Ayache (actor/Rhubarb Festival), and doing *A Midsummer Night's Dream* with Tim Welham. His next steps as an artist are "to find more ease in my movements, thoughts, and physical changes. To let myself laugh and cry when I need to. To write an interesting play about stories that are really important to me." His ultimate life/career goal is to be a really cool uncle or dad.

# MARYAM'S HIJRAH

In the midst of the 1991 Shi'a rebellion against the government of Saddam Hussein in Iraq, Salwa and her newborn daughter Maryam narrowly escape a massacre in their village. Twenty years later, Maryam has grown to call this distant country home and her mother has hidden the events of her past from her. When Maryam's ethereal friend Qaraqoz visits her imagination to uncover the truths about her history, Maryam must decide whether to keep the past in the past, or break into the most poignant realities of her humanity. This piece asks us to think about the inner innocence that exists in all humans. Who is allowed to be innocent? Who is tasked with telling the ugly truth? How do we face the worst parts of us?

**MENTOR:** Guillermo Verdecchia

**THANK YOU TO:** Najiah Al-Tamimi my grandma in Heaven, Luma Al-Tamimi and Alaa Al-Kinani, my partner Rosie Harbans, my friends (you know who you are), and the many mentors involved

**HEADS UP!** Language that refers to war, sexual violence, and physical abuse

# PRODUCTIONS PROGRAM

**THE PRODUCTIONS PROGRAM** is the most independent program at Paprika. Participants bring a dream project, and Paprika provides all the infrastructure of a professional festival (plus personalized training and guidance). All Paprika Productions are created by participants of all skill levels and at any stage of development. They're matched with a professional mentor who supports their process. Past participants have staged dance pieces, musicals, plays, installation art, and clown shows.

# MENTORS AND FACILITATORS

## AUDREY DWYER | PRODUCTIONS PROGRAM MENTOR

"Paprika is making space for young artists to develop directing and leadership skills in a hands-on setting. This program impacts the participants in numerous ways. They learn about leadership, people management, long-term planning, thinking on your feet, problem solving and creative thinking. I'm only naming a few here but the list is endless and the impact is long lasting. Paprika is shaping Canada's future artists and it is both exciting and inspiring. Whether the artists involved in Paprika stay in the theatre industry or move on to other environments, I feel that Paprika contributes creative thinkers and leaders. It is quite thrilling to engage with young artists as they stretch towards the unknown. It is an honor to participate and to support and cheer on from the sidelines!"

## JULIE TEPPERMAN | PRODUCTIONS PROGRAM MENTOR

"I continue to be in awe of the sheer bravery, ambition and determination that Dharma and Kelsi possess in putting this raw new work up in front of an audience. I admire their stamina, their fearlessness, and their hunger to learn. Being a Paprika Mentor reminds me how vital it is in any mentorship situation to take my cues from them as to how I can be most helpful."

# DHARMA BIZIER

**DHARMA BIZIER** is a recent graduate of the musical theatre program at Sheridan College. She has a Bachelor's Degree ("holy crap!"). She was recently in a new musical called *My Bonnie Lass* by Johnny Reid and Matt Murray: "It will always hold a special place in my heart." Dharma wants to see theatre that challenges its audiences and has intricate, complicated, and multi-faceted women at its core. Her ultimate life goal is to have a library with a window seat in her house.

# KELSI JAMES

**KELSI JAMES** is a theatre performer and creator. She is passionate about community and creating positive social change through joy, wonder, love and holding each other up. She is most proud of performing in *The Threepenny Opera* at Sheridan College (directed by Allyson McMackon) and *The Walrus* (her next project with Dharma!). She wants to see brave theatre that asks difficult questions and demands that we think and we feel and we grow - and that we do so in community.

# HERESY

*Heresy* is a new bilingual musical centering around two women, Jeanne d'Arc and her mother Isabelle Romée, and their individual struggles against the religious corruption of the Catholic Church. After hearing Angels for the first time, Jeanne sets out to create a more authentic and honest Church. Isabelle marries into the Church and is thrust into a world that is not as warm and welcoming as she originally believed it to be. These women must face the challenges that come from confronting a male-dominated system while fighting to stay true to their beliefs. A story told in both French and English, *Heresy* demonstrates how the Church has silenced and smothered women in the past and highlights its continuous oppression of intelligent, powerful women through generations.

**DIRECTOR/BOOKWRITER/CO-LYRICIST:** Dharma Bizier
**COMPOSER/CO-LYRICIST:** Kelsi James
**MUSICAL DIRECTOR/ACCOMPANIST:** Juliette Jones
**STAGE MANAGER:** Kim Moreira
**LIGHTING DESIGNER:** Michelle Campbell
**MENTOR/DRAMATURG:** Julie Tepperman

**FEATURING:**

Noah Beemer
Katie Martin
Kirsten Kwong
Mikayla Stradiotto
Emma Burke-Kleinman
Jill Goranson
Matthew Gawley
Liam Crober-Best
Alexa MacDougall
Michael Derworiz
Connor Briggs
Jodie Edmunds
Aaron Ryder

**THANK YOU TO:** Allyson McMackon, Sarah Kitz, Sheridan College, Dave Myers, and Robbie Gontier for kickstarting this process and creating the beautiful partnership that we have.
**HEADS UP!** Violence and strong religious language

**PRESENTING PARTNERS:** The Musical Stage Company, Nightwood Theatre, Théâtre français de Toronto

# RAIS CLARKE-MENDES

**RAIS CLARKE-MENDES** is a theatre artist, actor and activist. She is passionate about giving voice to narratives that challenge the world around her. She does this through theatre, art and activism. Last year she performed in Things Falling Apart's one woman show entitled *The Session*. She was a part of Outside The March's Artistic Accomplice program where she performed in their pre-show sequence for the production *Jerusalem*. Rais plans to attend theatre school in the fall of 2019 to develop her skills as an actor and artist and hopes to one day perform on the biggest stages in the world.

# HOW WE BREATHE

Following the crisis of a loved one, three friends battle the nuances of Blackness and mental health. Through heated conversation, these three embark on journeys of self exploration, highlighting the different ways depression and anxiety can manifest in one's life. This is a story about community, strength, healing and reconciliation with one's self.

**DIRECTOR:** Rais Clarke-Mendes
**CREATED BY:** Rais Clarke-Mendes, Chel Carmichael, Quenelle George, Alicia Plummer
**MENTOR:** Audrey Dwyer
**STAGE MANAGER:** Malaika Eyoh
**FEATURING:** Chel Carmichael, Quenelle George, Alicia Plummer
**THANK YOU TO:** Jasmyn Fyffe, Weyni Mengesha and Arvin Tsai
**HEADS UP!** Discussions of suicide, mental health and explicit language

**PRESENTING PARTNERS:** Workman Arts, Obsidian Theatre Company, Little Black Afro Theatre Company

# FESTIVAL ADMINISTRATORS PROGRAM

# THE FESTIVAL ADMINISTRATORS

gain hands-on leadership training in this program designed for emerging arts administrators, producers, and leaders. Festival Administrators are matched with staff members for individualized mentorship and engage with Paprika as creative thinkers, planning fundraising events and promotional projects to ensure the success of the Festival for its participants and audience. From seeking sponsorship, to planning a hoppin' fundraiser, to creating online marketing, Festival Administrators have a hand in it all and are a vital part of Paprika.

# MENTORS AND FACILITATORS

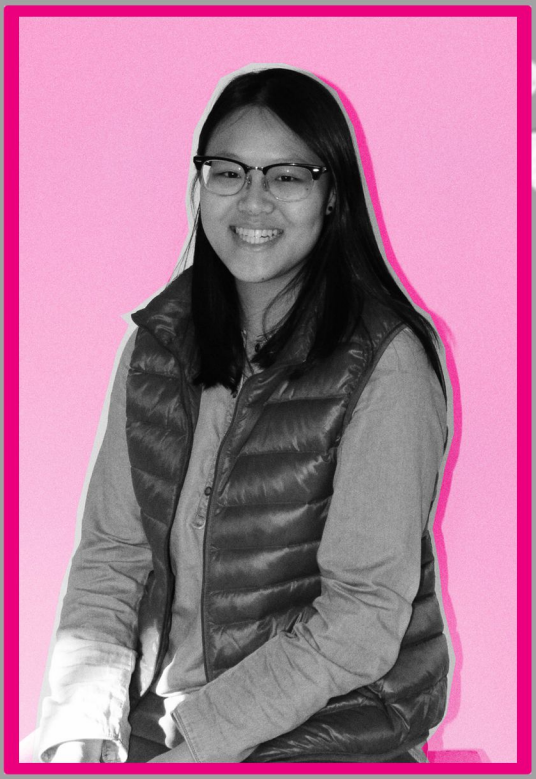
## HANA EL NIWAIRI | LEAD FESTIVAL ADMINISTRATOR

"The most important thing I've learned about being a mentor this year is how crucial it is to try to provide various learning opportunities for different learning styles, and especially to pay attention when sometimes the method being used isn't quite working - and adapt accordingly. The impact of the Festival Administrators program is providing hands-on experience in arts administration and management for participants who may have primarily had artistic experience and less training in management/administration. It offers a behind-the-scenes look at how an arts organization functions."

# ÁINE DONNELLY

**ÁINE DONNELLY** is a creator, producer and administrator. She is currently developing her play *egg.*, and directing in InspiraTO's 10 minute play festival. She is passionate about new work and education through drama. Her next step as an artist is becoming more involved in the theatre community as a creator and communicator. Her ultimate life/career goal is to become an Artistic Director.

# RENEE WONG



**RENEE WONG** is an actor and playwright. She is passionate about giving voice to minorities. Renee is most proud of being a playwright in Act Fast - The 24 Hour Theatre Festival and working on a TYA show that tours in elementary schools. She wants to see movement combined with theatre and work that  explores human bodies with a rich storyline. Her life/career goal is to perform on a big stage or go on tour.

# AIMEE POULIN


**AIMEE POULIN** is a performer and stage manager. She is passionate about human connection, integrity and accountability. Aimee is most proud of her production of *The Weavers* at Randolph Academy for the Performing Arts, a school tour of *The Snow Queen*, and bringing theatre to many rural locations in Ontario. Her ultimate life/career goal is to tour around the world!

# SOPHIE MUNDEN

**SOPHIE MUNDEN** is a theatre creator who is passionate about using theatre as a tool for social change. She is very proud of the work she has done with an incredible community of women on a show she created with her dear friend, Carmen Kruk, entitled *What She Said*. In September, Sophie will be going to the Royal Central School of Speech and Drama to start her MA in Applied Theatre. Her ultimate life goal is to build her theatre company, Off-Key Productions, to a place where they can support new and innovative Canadian work, while also acting as a force for good in the community.

# DANIEL MCGUIRE

**DANIEL MCGUIRE** is a designer and devisor. In theatre, he is passionate about community-engaged work. “Theatre is such a powerful tool in learning about and sharing different realities!” In the everyday he is obsessed with cold brew coffee. Iced coffee was so 2009. He would love to see more theatre that cares about the process over the result. "Paprika’s great like that - we need more spaces where people can just explore ideas or styles without so much pressure to make a perfect show."
As for ultimate life/career goals...😰

# ARTISTS MENTORING YOUTH

**The Artists Mentoring Youth (AMY) Project** is committed to transforming the arts landscape by providing accessible, affirming performing arts training & creation programs for women and non-binary youth from equity-seeking communities. With the mentorship of professional artists, AMY participants learn to tell their stories with honesty, integrity, and artistic rigour.

AMY has been serving the Greater Toronto Area since 2005. We create and develop programs in response to the artistic and social needs of our community and the greater Toronto community.

## OUR REGULAR PROGRAMMING INCLUDES:

- Spring Theatre Creation Program
- Summer Theatre Performance Intensive
- Film Training Program
- Performance Creation Program for Trans Women and Trans Femmes
- Write On Residency for emerging playwrights
- AMY Community Program

## THIS YEAR'S PAPRIKA FESTIVAL PERFORMERS:

Claudia Liz, Lyla Sherbin, A.C., Alice Cheng Meiqing, nevada jane arlow, Morgan Davis, Jericho Allick, Jenn Boulay

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