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ALBERTA THEATRE PROJECTS



ALBERTA THEATRE PROJECTS LAUNCHES NEW PLAYWRIGHTS UNIT TO CELEBRATE 45TH ANNIVERSARY SEASON

Nationally acclaimed local theatre company welcomes six Canadian playwrights producing cutting edge theatrical work to a collaborative new play development program.

CALGARY, ALBERTA – In celebration of [Alberta Theatre Projects' 45th anniversary season](#), the company is pleased to announce the creation of a new program designed to nurture and promote the talents of skilled Canadian writers: [The ATP Playwrights Unit](#). This cross-Canada initiative brings together some of the country's most passionate and daring playwrights at Alberta Theatre Projects to hone conceptual ideas or scripts for new works of theatre into full-fledged plays ready for production. Each creator will develop a new play over the course of the season with creative support from Alberta Theatre Projects' artistic staff and fellow members of the program. The program formally kicks off September 26 with an inaugural group of six playwrights, including 4 Calgarians.

Lead by Alberta Theatre Projects' Artistic Associate Laurel Green and Artistic Director Vanessa Porteous, the Playwrights Unit will provide artistic support, consultative resources, opportunities to workshop new material, and connections with artists involved in the ongoing work being presented by ATP at the Martha Cohen Theatre. "I'm so thrilled to have these fantastic playwrights on board and very much look forward to reading and hearing their work. I know they will move us and shake us. That's what Enbridge New Canadian Plays at ATP is all about," comments Vanessa Porteous.

The 16/17 program will culminate in a series of free public readings showcasing the artists' work in April 2017. Full details about the events will be available at www.atplive.com.

The six artists selected to participate for the launch of this program are:

- **Ken Cameron** (Calgary) is a multi-faceted artist, director and playwright whose work fluctuates between traditionally constructed plays and alternative art installations. Ken's most recent work, *The Blogfather* was awarded the Grand Prize of Alberta Playwriting Competition and his adaptation of *Cue For Treason* has been commissioned by The Stratford Festival.
- **Anna Chatterton** (Hamilton, Ontario) is a librettist, playwright and performer. This fall her opera *Sweat* will be produced by Centre for Contemporary Opera in Brooklyn, NY. Interested in exploring the lives of Alberta cowgirls, Anna visited her first rodeo this summer to conduct interviews with champion barrel-racers and team ropers as research for the work she will be developing in the ATP Playwrights Unit.
- **Michaela Jeffery** (Calgary) is a recent graduate of The National Theatre School of Canada, the recipient of the 2015 Enbridge Playwrights Award (Emerging Category) for her play *Going West*,

and two-time recipient of the Alberta Drama Festival Association's 'Outstanding Original Script Award'.

- **Arun Lakra** (Calgary) is a practicing ophthalmologist and eye surgeon as well as a screenwriter and director whose play *Sequence* has been produced internationally to critical acclaim and is being staged again in January 2017 at the Tarragon Theatre in Toronto. His feature film script, *Voices*, also won the Praxis Screenplay Competition.
- **Stephen Massicotte** (New York City, New York) is one of Canada's most produced playwrights and a talented artist with a keen interest in Canadian history. Originally from Calgary, his best-known play *Mary's Wedding* (which premiered at ATP) has received upward of a hundred productions.
- **Makambe K Simamba** (Calgary) is a writer and actress who got her start in the University of Lethbridge's Theatre and Dramatic Arts program. As a playwright, she has won provincial and national awards for her original play, *MUD* and she has recently appeared as an actress on television in the shot-in-Calgary series *Young Drunk Punk*.

Since it was founded in 1972, Alberta Theatre Projects has been recognized as a national leader in the creation and production of new Canadian plays, having premiered over 160 new works, including the recent 2016 Betty Mitchell Outstanding New Play Award winner *The Circle* by Geoffrey Simon Brown, which premiered at ATP in October 2015 and is currently going on to production this fall at Toronto's Tarragon Theatre.

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ABOUT ALBERTA THEATRE PROJECTS

Alberta Theatre Projects is a Calgary-based, not-for-profit, professional theatre company that celebrates the art of live theatre. From its home in The Martha Cohen Theatre at Arts Commons, the company produces world-calibre shows with a focus on idea-driven new works, plays by Canadian playwrights, and contemporary theatre from around the world. It is also a national leader in new play development and dramaturgy.

www.ATPlive.com

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