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ALLIANCE FOR
CANADIAN
Musicals

TORONTO
FRINGE
FESTIVAL

For Immediate Release: May 1 to July 13, 2026.

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“A NON-CANONICAL MUSICAL ADVENTURE WITH POOKAMHURA MISTRESS OF B-ROLL”

A NEW MUSICAL BY CHRIS CRACKNELL

BOOK AND STAGE DIRECTION BY BRIAN MORTON

Presented by Pookamhura Alliance Productions

At the Theatre Passe Muraille Mainstage, 16 Ryerson Avenue.

Thursday July 2 @ 9:30pm -- Saturday July 4 @ 5:30pm
Sunday July 5 @ 3:00pm -- Wednesday July 8 @ 7:00pm
Thursday July 9 @ 1:30pm -- Friday July 10 @ 3:00pm
Saturday July 11 @ 8:15pm

Born out of Hamilton’s fiercely independent theatre scene, A NON-CANONICAL MUSICAL ADVENTURE WITH POOKAMHURA: MISTRESS OF B-ROLL is a bold, funny, and emotionally charged new Canadian musical that brings gaming culture to life on stage. Blending live performance, original songs, and animated projections inspired by MMORPG gameplay, this critically praised Hamilton Fringe hit arrives at the 2026 Toronto Fringe, inviting audiences into a world where avatars and real lives collide, and where identity, friendship, and belonging are put to the test.

A random party of online gamers gathers in a virtual dungeon, waiting for one more player to join their quest. Among them is Pookamhura, a mischievous gnome rogue inspired by Shakespeare’s Puck, stirring chaos and connection in equal measure. As the players pass the time through song and storytelling, personal truths begin to emerge, culminating in a revelation that forces the group to confront prejudice, loyalty, and the courage it takes to be seen. What begins as a playful fantasy evolves into a deeply human story about self-discovery and the risks and rewards of authenticity.

The production was first developed and premiered at the 2025 Hamilton Fringe Festival, where it grew out of a tight-knit collective of local artists committed to creating original Canadian work. That grassroots spirit remains at the heart of the piece. Created during the pandemic as a YouTube series by composer Chris Cracknell, POOKAMHURA became a way to stay creative and connected during isolation. Its evolution into a live performance reflects the collaborative energy of Hamilton’s theatre community, where artists build ambitious work from the ground up.

At its core, POOKAMHURA is a celebration of queer identity and chosen community. The world of online gaming becomes a space where characters can explore gender, identity, and belonging with a freedom not always available in everyday life. The production embraces that spirit both onstage and off, with company members proudly representing queer and LGBTQ+ communities, and audiences encouraged to bring that energy into the theatre. It is a show about finding your people, whether in a dungeon raid or in the real world.

Directed by Hamilton-based playwright Brian Morton, recipient of the 2013 Hamilton Arts Award for Theatre, the production builds on a strong track record of original work. Morton's recent play THE NIGHT THEY RAIDED MCMASTER won Best in Venue at the 2022 Hamilton Fringe Festival.

The musical features an ensemble of performers including Emily Bolyea, Chris Cracknell, Mason Micevski, and Francis Wallace, with music, lyrics and story by Cracknell, who developed the original POOKAMHURA web series over four years. The Hamilton production drew enthusiastic critical response for its originality, musicality, and emotional impact.

Now part of the Alliance for Canadian Musicals satellite venue at Theatre Passe Muraille, POOKAMHURA joins a national showcase of new Canadian musical theatre, sharing the stage with seven other original musicals.

At once playful, heartfelt, and visually striking, POOKAMHURA speaks to anyone who has ever searched for connection in unexpected places. Whether you are a gamer or not, this is a story about the courage to reveal who you are behind the screen. It is exactly the kind of daring, community-driven work that defines the Fringe.

“A NON-CANONICAL MUSICAL ADVENTURE WITH POOKAMHURA MISTRESS OF B-ROLL”, is a **Canadian Actor's Equity Production, under the Festival policy**; it is one of 123 productions featured in the 2026 Toronto Fringe Festival. The performance schedule for the production is:

Thursday July 2 @ 9:30pm -- Saturday July 4 @ 5:30pm
Sunday July 5 @ 3:00pm -- Wednesday July 8 @ 7:00pm
Thursday July 9 @ 1:30pm -- Friday July 10 @ 3:00pm
Saturday July 11 @ 8:15pm

All tickets are \$19; (\$15.25 + \$3.75 service fee), at the door. Book in advance online at www.fringetoronto.com. The performances on July 2 & 4 are PWYC (Pay What You Can); the performance on Thursday July 9, is mask mandatory

For more show information, or to watch the video trailer, please visit www.pookplay.ca.

“A NON-CANONICAL MUSICAL ADVENTURE WITH POOKAMHURA MISTRESS OF B-ROLL” contains mature content, and adult language:

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*The world out there is full of trouble
there are dangers all around.
But happiness shared is happiness doubled
And there's just so many friends waiting to be found*

*So roam, Pookamhura roam
You happy little, sappy little gnome
You're gonna be okay
Making friends along the way
So roam, you little Pookamhura roam...*