

Nithy, Ace Detective

COMPANY/PROJECT BIO

The show was written by wife-husband duo, Arlin Dixon and Matthew Gorman. Usually found in separate corners of the room, typing away on their computers with music blaring through their headphones, Arlin and Matt decided to look up from their individual projects, and collaborate. And you know what? It was pretty fun.

Nithy, Ace Detective was inspired by a young girl they saw two summers ago whose confidence they never forgot.

“One day, on the bus, we saw a kid waiting for the light to cross a major street. It was a grey day, about to rain, and traffic was rushing by. She was probably eleven or twelve, wearing a purple sweat suit with a bright pink backpack, standing tall with a little confident smile. It was the height of rush hour and we were a bit worried at first, but then just a few steps behind, we saw the crossing guard. It was a reminder that kids are strong. They can be braver than we sometimes give them credit for, but they also need support.

Everyone can remember the first time that they experienced death. It’s like something shifts, and the world makes less sense than it did before. It’s a little more frightening, and a little lonelier. *Nithy, Ace Detective* is about a girl who loves to write her own stories, especially mysteries, but can never figure out the endings. When a loss in the family sends everything into disarray, she enlists us – the audience – to help her find an ending. She needs our support. She needs us to listen.

We can think of a venue no more fitting than the Fringe Festival to launch this story. It’s a festival where audiences and creators come together in celebration and support of theatre, recognizing the power of storytelling. Perhaps together we’ll find that an ending isn’t the important bit after all. It’s the stuff in between that counts.”

The script has been helped through its development by a number of elementary school teachers, past and present.



Arlin Dixon, Co-Creator

Arlin is an actor and playwright in Toronto. She studied at George Brown Theatre School and received a Bachelor of Arts with Honours at York University. Her first play *Eirlys and Eckhart* was produced by Cart/Horse Theatre at Theatre Passe Muraille, and a workshop performance of her second play, *B Side*, was performed at the Halifax Fringe Festival. Arlin was short-listed for the Write from the Hip program with Nightwood Theatre.



Matthew Gorman, Co-Creator

Originally from Nova Scotia, Matthew has been living and working in Toronto for the last dozen years. His last play *Western, a play with music*, was featured at the 2017 Next Stage Festival and was short listed for the Herman Voedan playwriting contest. Other work includes *Adventure!*, *Like A Dog*, and *Our Lady of the Sea*. He has worked extensively as an actor and director, most recently touring the United States with Roseneath Theatre’s *The Incredible Speediness of Jamie Cavanaugh*. Matthew was the artistic director of Cart/Horse Theatre for nine years.

Both Arlin and Matthew have appeared in or been involved with a whole bunch of Fringe shows over the years, including *Adventure!*, *Like A Dog*, *Rum And Vodka*, *Napoleon vs the Turk*, and *The Making Of...* . This is the first year of their company, Jump Star.



Kate Keenan, Director

Kate has been creating theatre for kids for over 20 years. She started out by co-founding Shrimp Magnet Theatre Company - writing, producing, directing and performing in 6 original TYA shows on Centre Island, the Toronto Fringe and across the country. Then she wrote and performed across the continent in the live theatricals of TV shows such as *Little Bear*, *Franklin* and *The Backyardigans*. Somewhere in there, she was also lucky enough to be Turtle, the Therapeutic Clown at Sick Kids Hospital. The last show she directed, *The Really Real Adventures of Scott Free & Will Do*, which she also co-wrote, runs at Solar Stage all summer long. She's currently 1/3 of the kid's rock band "The Space Chums" and a writer for children's television. Kate is delighted to be working with Jump Star to bring the brilliant Nithy, and her world, to life!



Zena Driver as Nithy

Originally from Vancouver, Zena is happy to now call Toronto home. Past stage credits include: *Mental the Musical* (directed by Fiona Hogan), *Into the Woods* (directed by Peter Jorgensen) and *Tina n' Tony's Wedding* (directed by Tanja Dixon-Warren and Michael Fear). She also loves working in the animated voice-over world, where she gets to create the unique heart of each character through her voice. Zena is over-the-moon kind of excited to be making her Toronto Fringe Festival debut!



Kanika Ambrose as Sarah, Mrs. Hornschwagler, Wendy and Justine

Kanika is a Toronto-based playwright and artist. Her short plays *My Umm Hmm*, *Sleep Country*, and *Aprés*, have been produced in Toronto festivals including the Paprika Festival and rock.paper.sistahz!. Her one-person play *The Art of Traditional Head-tying*, premiered at Crow's Theatre's East End Performance CRAWL and was part of Toronto Fringe 2014. She spent two seasons in Obsidian Theatre's Playwright's Unit and one in Cahoots Theatre's Hot House. She is a Dora Mavor Moore nominee for her role in *Binti's Journey* and was a part of the Dora nominated Outstanding Production *Obeah Opera*. Kanika is a graduate of Ryerson Theatre School: Acting and is founder of Dominican bélé dance group, Mabouya Dance Company. This year, she has been featured as one of Cahoots Theatre's 30 for 30 theatremakers.



Christopher Fowler as Sam, Ralph Bogosian and Gordon

Christopher is delighted to return to the Fringe, having previously appeared in *Love's Labour's Lost* (Shakespeare BASH'd) and *Scheherazade* (Nobody's Business Theatre/Next Stage Theatre Festival.) His other theatre credits include works with Humber River Shakespeare (*As You Like It*, *Twelfth Night*), Left Foot First Productions (*In Pink*), Crate Productions (*The Fort at York*), Theatre New Brunswick (*Smokescreen*; *For Art's Sake*; *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe*), Classical Theatre Project (*Romeo and Juliet*, *Othello*) and Youth Theatre Station (director, *Romeo and Juliet*). You can tweet with Christopher after the show @christofow.



Stephanie Taylor, Stage Manager

Stephanie is a Toronto-based Stage Manager, just trying to make art and make rent at the same time. She studied Drama at the University of Windsor. Favourite stage management credits include: *Dalton and Company* (The Theatre Centre), *Naked Ladies* (Summerworks Performance Festival), *The Queen's Conjuror* (Circlesnake Productions), and *Western* (Next Stage Theatre Festival). She will continue her summer with magician and storyteller Keith Brown at the Winnipeg and Edmonton Fringe Festivals. Stephanie can't imagine a better way to spend this time of year than at the Fringe!