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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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CIRCLESNAKE PRODUCTIONS

Founded in 2013 by Alec Toller, Circlesnake Productions uses collaborative creation to produce new work with a cinematic approach to storytelling. By using genres that are rarely put on stage to explore new approaches to theatre. Circlesnake grounds heightened theatricality through the understated realism of filmic performance. Circlesnake explores the intersection between theatre and film to find powerful new stories.

Circlesnake Productions is proud to announce the addition of Artistic Producers Joshua Browne and Mikaela Dyke to the company, and look forward to their new shows in development. The company is excited for their upcoming year as a part of Toronto's vibrant, rapidly-growing independent theatre scene. Circlesnake's unique process of creating work through structured improvisation and collective writing has already garnered some local attention and acclaim. They were nominated in four categories at the MyTheatre Awards for their 2016 productions, *The Queen's Conjurer* and *Slip*, winning one for Alex Paxton-Beeseley's performance as Detective Lynn Barrett in *Slip*.

"Where the success of this production begins and ends is with its performers and Toller... who [are] clearly not interested in easy answers, but rather in the complex relationship between belief systems and humans' inner and outer lives."

- Karen Fricker, Toronto Star – *The Queen's Conjurer*

Circlesnake partnered with the Tarragon Workspace for a remount of their critically acclaimed production, *Slip*, in March, 2017. *Slip* follows Detective Lynn Barrett as she tries to piece together a mysterious death, while trying to hold on to her fading memory. Her attempts to uncover the truth are interrupted by increasingly intrusive memories that interact with the narrative of the murder. Lynn struggles to discern reality from memory and memory from fiction and risks fading into obsolescence and mental decay.

Four Stars! "A devious and clever murder mystery... churns along on impressive imagination"

- Steve Fisher, Torontoist - *Slip*

During the Toronto International Fringe Festival in July, Circlesnake is excited to partner with GreenLine Theatre to remount their highly physical thrill-ride, *Special Constables*. The critically acclaimed production, originally produced in 2013, is an action-packed comedy that chronicles the return of Toronto's most elite police force: the TTC Transit Police. Jameson, a former constable, is responsible for the disbanding of the Special Constables, but when a Metropass counterfeiting ring threatens to take over the TTC, Jameson has one shot to redeem both his former unit and himself. The Toronto Fringe Festival runs from July 5th to the 16th, 2017.

"Toller and the very able cast's... use [of] inventive group movement... makes the 90-minute ride worth the fare."

- Jordan Bimm, NOW Magazine

Circlesnake will also be showcasing its newest developing work, *Descent*, in September as a staged reading. (Dates TBA). Inspired by the work of H. P. Lovecraft, *Descent* follows Winters, a black history professor, as she traces down her missing brother. The further she explores her dark family history, the more complex and supernatural it becomes. As Winters discovers that every generation a family member disappears. She questions her findings, and the soundness of her own mind. *Descent* explores the connection between systemic racism, secrecy, and personal terror in a psychological theatrical space that is truly horrifying, and existentially unsettling.

More details about these productions will be shared closer to their opening dates.

AWARDS

My Entertainment World Awards 2016:

NOMINEE – The Queen's Conjuror - Outstanding Ensemble

NOMINEE – Slip - Outstanding New Work

NOMINEE – Slip - Outstanding Production

NOMINEE – Alex Paxton-Beesly, Slip - Outstanding Actress

My Entertainment World Awards 2015:

WINNER - Dark Matter - Best Independent Production

WINNER - Kat Letwin, Dark Matter - Best Actress

NOMINEE - Mikaela Dyke, Dark Matter - Best Supporting Actress

NOMINEE - Ensemble, Dark Matter - Best Ensemble

CIRCLESNAKE PRODUCTIONS IS:

Alec Toller – *Artistic Director* - Alec is the artistic director of Circlesnake Productions and director of *Slip*, *The Queen's Conjuror*, *Dark Matter* (winner of MyTheatre Best Production), *Drunk Enough to Say I Love You?*, *Special Constables*, *Angel City*, and assistant director on the triple Dora nominated *Laws of Motion*. Alec directs for Sex T-Rex, the physical theatre company behind *Wasteland*, *Swordplay: A Play of Swords*, *Watch Out Wildkat*. Film: *Play the Film* (Winner of six awards including Best Feature and Best Screenplay, and CCA nominee) and *Akela* (currently in post-production). Alec is studying for his Masters in Psychology at Adler University to become a therapist.

Joshua Browne – *Artistic Producer* - Joshua Browne is a Toronto actor and theatremaker. After graduating with a BFA in Acting from the University of Windsor, he's been privileged to work with an array of great companies in Toronto and around the country, including IFT Theatre, Circlesnake Productions, Theatre Gargantua, Shakespeare Bash'd, Theatre By the Bay, Hart House Theatre, and many more. Recent credits include: Tom in *Glass Menagerie* (Watermark Theatre), Mercutio/Laertes/Macduff/Sir Toby (The Classical Theatre Project), Tybalt in *R&J* (Theatre By The Bay), Kurtz in *Dark Matter* and Edward in *The Queen's Conjuror* (Circlesnake Theatre), Bill Atlas in the workshop production of *Avaricious* (Theatre Gargantua), The Trader in *nightmareDREAM* (IFT/Obsidian), and Jim in the hit world-premiere of *Byhalia, Mississippi* (cue6 Theatre).

Mikaela Dyke – *Artistic Producer* - Mikaela Dyke is a writer/performer from St. John's with an extensive background in comedy and theatre. Her solo shows, *Dying Hard* and *Epic Pitch*, have toured all across North America to critical and audience acclaim. Highlights of her comedy career include hosting the Stephen Leacock debate, performing in Bad Dog Theatre's *Peak Falls*, and performing with Tony Ho during JFL42. Selected Theatre: Marjorie in *Jewel* (Broken Earth); Jane in *Slip*, Cal(liope) in *Dark Matter*, Skitch/Dollarhide in *Special Constables* (Circlesnake Productions); *Sad People* (Tony Ho); *Dying Hard*, *Epic Pitch*, *My Name is Rachel Corrie* (A Vagrant). Selected Film/TV: *Sight Unseen* (Zonial Pictures); *The Beaverton* (CTV); *Good Morning, Tonight!* (Crazy Shirt Productions).

PAST REVIEWS

“This is some of the most provocative, beautifully realized theatre in the city.”

- Lynn Slotkin, Slotkin Letter, on *Drunk Enough to Say I Love You?* and the Caryl Churchill Playwright Project

“Under the direction of Alec Toller, the pacing never lags! Never! I can't recall even a single dull moment”

- Istvan Dugalin, Mooney on Theatre on *Special Constables*

"Despite the genre and subject matter, the script doesn't rely on spaceship tech-speak or nihilistic doom-and-gloom, instead creating believable, accessible characters in an otherworldly setting"

- Carly Maga, The Grid on *Dark Matter*