

# HOWLAND RETURNS TO THE TORONTO FRINGE FESTIVAL WITH AN ALL-STAR IMPROVISED MURDER MYSTERY

**Fresh off 10 Dora Award nominations, the acclaimed Toronto theatre company returns to the festival where it all began.**

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TORONTO, ON — After earning 10 Dora Mavor Moore Award nominations this week, multi-award-winning theatre company The Howland Company is returning to the Toronto Fringe Festival this summer with *YOU CHOOSE: An Improvised Murder Mystery*.

For Howland, the production marks more than just a new show—it is a homecoming.

The company first emerged at the Toronto Fringe Festival, where its early Best of Fringe and Patron’s Pick winning productions of *52 Pick-Up*, *Lemons Lemons Lemons Lemons Lemons* and *Entrances and Exits* helped establish its reputation for inventive storytelling, bold theatricality, and unforgettable audience experiences. More than a decade later, following national recognition, sold-out productions, and numerous awards, Howland is returning to the festival that helped launch the company.

Co-created by **Ruth Goodwin** (The Howland Company) and **Liz Johnston** (The Second City), the duo behind Howland’s Canadian Comedy Award nominated show *Entrances and Exits*, *YOU CHOOSE* combines the spontaneity of improv with the suspense of a classic murder mystery.

Inspired by the social deduction mechanics that have made shows like *The Traitors* a cultural phenomenon, *YOU CHOOSE* puts a unique twist on the traditional murder mystery. At the start of each performance, the audience secretly selects the murderer—and unlike a classic whodunit, they know exactly who the killer is. The cast, however, remains completely in the dark. As the investigation unfolds, a group of improvisers must navigate clues, accusations, and shifting alliances while unknowingly sharing the stage with a hidden traitor in their midst.

Rounding out the cast is a powerhouse lineup of Canadian comedy talent, including Fringe darling **Conor Bradbury** (*Sex T-Rex*, *The Second City*), *This Hour Has 22 Minutes* writer **Brandon Hackett** and Second City Mainstage Alums **Paloma Nuñez**, **Sharjil Rasool**, and **Christian Smith**. With backgrounds spanning award-winning sketch comedy, improvisation, television, and theatre, the ensemble is uniquely equipped to navigate a mystery where nobody knows what's coming next—not even the cast.

"The Toronto Fringe Festival has always been an important part of Howland's story," says co-creator Ruth Goodwin. "It's where we found our audience, took our earliest artistic risks, and began building the company we are today. Returning to Fringe with a show that's this playful, ambitious, and collaborative feels incredibly exciting."

***YOU CHOOSE: An Improvised Murder Mystery***

Toronto Fringe Festival - The Tarragon Theatre

Tue 30th Jun 2026 – 7:00 pm

Fri 3rd Jul 2026 – 12:30 pm

Sun 5th Jul 2026 – 8:00 pm

Mon 6th Jul 2026 – 2:00 pm

Tue 7th Jul 2026 – 4:00 pm

Thu 9th Jul 2026 – 10:30 pm

Sat 11th Jul 2026 – 6:00 pm

**ABOUT THE HOWLAND COMPANY**

Since 2013, The Howland Company has built a reputation for artistic excellence, innovation, and integrity, earning critical acclaim, multiple Dora Awards, Toronto Theatre Critic's Award and a Canadian Comedy Award nomination. Some of Howland's past productions include Canadian premieres of *The Wolves* (Co-Produced with Crow's Theatre) *Punk Rock*, *Prodigal* (Co-Produced with Crow's Theatre), *Heroes of the Fourth Turning* (Co-Produced with Crow's Theatre), *The Welkin* (Co-Produced with Crow's and Soulpepper Theatre) and most recently, *take rimbaud* (with Buddies in Bad Times). Through ambitious productions, rigorous development initiatives, and a deep investment in artistic community, The Howland Company has established itself as one of Canada's most respected independent theatre companies and a meaningful home for daring new work.