

For Immediate Release:

**CONVERGENCE THEATRE PRESENTS *ATHABASCA*, THE
FIRST SITE-SPECIFIC SHOW AT THE NEXT STAGE
THEATRE FESTIVAL**

A play about Big Oil, climate change and the nature of protest

TORONTO, ON – **Convergence Theatre** (Toronto's "Best Site-Specific Theatre Company"- NOW Magazine) is thrilled to present the world premiere of *Athabasca*, written and performed by Canadian theatre legends **David S. Craig** (founder of Theatre Direct Canada, co-founder & former Artistic Director of Roseneath Theatre, multiple Dora Award-winner and recipient of the Barbara Hamilton Award for Artistic Excellence) and **Richard Greenblatt** (co-creator of international mega-hit *2 Pianos, 4 Hands*, 7-time Dora Award winning director, producer & actor, recently featured in *I Call Myself Princess* - Paper Canoe Projects, Cahoots Theatre with Native Earth) and directed by Convergence Theatre's **Aaron Willis**.

Athabasca is the first **site-specific production** in the 11-year history of the **Next Stage Theatre Festival** and will run from **January 9-20, 2019** at a unique office complex in the heart of Liberty Village.

ABOUT THE SHOW:

In an office building in Fort McMurray, a senior public relations executive for a major Canadian oil company is confronted by a journalist turned environmental activist, who is violently determined to shut down the Athabasca oil sands. Next Stage's first-ever site specific production is an uncompromising battle of wills that poses the question – how far are you willing to go to save our planet?

ABOUT CONVERGENCE:

Convergence Theatre returns to Next Stage, 10 years after presenting their hit production *YICHUD (Seclusion)*, which went on to a full production at Theatre Passe Muraille in 2010 and headlined the Magnetic North Festival in 2011. Convergence is run by husband & wife duo Aaron Willis (actor-director) and Julie Tepperman (actor-playwright), named one of Toronto's "most respected theatre duos" by NOW Magazine.

Since forming the company in 2006, they have both gone on to create some of the most innovative work in Toronto: *The Unending* (2016) *Passion Play* (2013), *The Gladstone Variations* (2007/08), and *AutoShow* (2006). Aaron has directed at theatres across the city, most notably at Soulpepper and Tarragon, as well as being part of the Stratford Festival's inaugural Michael Langham Workshop for Classical Theatre Direction and associate producer at Canadian Stage.

Julie has acted at theatres across the city, has been commissioned to write two musicals – one by Tapestry Opera (*Hook Up*) and one by the Musical Stage Company (*Polly*)

Peel), and most recently co-created/co-wrote/co-directed *Brantwood*, one of the most ambitious site-specific shows this country has ever seen.

ARTISTIC STATEMENT: *"With each new project we challenge ourselves to find innovative ways to push the boundaries of intimacy between performer and audience. We create plays in site-specific and non-traditional venues, as well as completely re-imagine traditional theatre spaces. We invite our audiences to be an integral part of their theatre-going experience by exploring ways to fully immerse them in the world of the play."*

CREATIVE TEAM:

David S. Craig & Richard Greenblatt, Playwrights/Performers

Aaron Willis, Director/Producer

Julie Tepperman, Dramaturge/Producer

Anahita Dehbonehie, Set and Costume Design

Jennifer Lennon, Lighting Design

Richard Lee, Sound Design and Fight Choreography

Meghan Speakman, Stage Manager

Geneviève Trottier, Producer

Keshia Palm, Assistant Director

PERFORMANCE SCHEDULE: January 9 – 20, 2019 **NO SHOW Tuesday January 15**

Start time for all performances is 7:30 PM. Running time is approx. 90 minutes.

The show takes place at a site-specific venue at the **Toronto Carpet Factory, 77 Mowat Ave. Toronto, ON, M6K 3E3**. This venue, including washrooms, is fully accessible.

TICKETS for *Athabasca* at Next Stage are **\$15.00** and can be purchased online at www.fringetoronto.com or by phone at 416-966-1062. Advance tickets and Next Stage passes will be available as of November 26, 2018. Next Stage Early Bird savings of 15% can be accessed for single tickets until December 7, 2018.

Twitter: @TO_Convergence **#athabascaTO #NSTF**

For more information on *Athabasca* and Next Stage Theatre Festival, visit www.fringetoronto.com/festivals/next-stage. For more information on Convergence Theatre please visit www.convergence theatre.com.

****Please update your listings & announcements****

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