

ATHABASCA ARTIST BIOGRAPHIES

PLAYWRIGHTS / PERFORMERS

David S. Craig is a Montreal born, Toronto based theatre artist. He has written 29 professionally produced dramatic works including the hit comedy *Having Hope at Home* and the internationally acclaimed *Danny, King of the Basement*.

During the summer of 2018, he will direct the premiere of his new play *Lysistrata and the Temple of Gaia (aka Apocolyptus Interruptus)* at the Odyssey Theatre in Ottawa. Other successful plays include: *Bombers: Reaping the Whirlwind* which premiered at the 4th Line Theatre in 2017, *Double Trouble*, which premiered in Washington, DC and was nominated for the Helen Hayes Award, *Smokescreen*, which has been translated into five languages, his award-winning adaptation of Carlo Goldoni's *The Fan* and his adaptation of Michel Ende's *The Neverending Story*, which premiered at the Seattle Children's Theatre and has had productions throughout North America. His one-man show *Napalm the Magnificent*, which he wrote and performed, toured extensively over a nine-year period including a commercial run at the John Houseman Theatre in Manhattan.

David has won The Dora Mavor Moore Award for Outstanding Production three times, the Chalmers New Play Award three times, the Rideau Award for Outstanding Adaptation, The Canada Council Prize, The Writer's Guild Prize for Radio Drama and a Harold. Toronto's NOW Magazine named Mr. Craig, "One of Canada's Top Twenty Playwrights" and in 2014 he received the Barbara Hamilton Award for Artistic Excellence from the City of Toronto.

As an actor, Mr. Craig trained at the Rose Bruford College of Speech and Drama in London, England and has performed in productions across North America. He has twice been nominated for the Dora Mavor Moore Award for Outstanding Performance. www.davidscraig.com

Richard Greenblatt is an actor, director, writer, and musician who has been a professional theatre artist since 1974. He was born in Montréal and received his acting training at Dawson College and the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art in London, England. Since graduating, he has performed in theatres across Canada and abroad, as well as in feature films, television and radio. Most recently, he performed in *Stupid Fucking Bird* and *The Jewish Radio Hour*, both in Toronto. This fall, he will perform in Jani Lauzon's play *I Call Myself Princess* at the Aki Studio.

He has directed well over 130 productions for theatres across the country - the vast majority being original and/or Canadian works - by such writers as George F. Walker, Judith Thompson, Diane Flacks, and Adam Pettle, amongst many others. He has also directed many groundbreaking and award-winning plays for young audiences, including plays by David S. Craig, Chris Craddock, and Dennis Foon, amongst others. Most recently, he directed Diane Flacks' *Waiting Room* at the Tarragon Theatre and *R-E-B-E-C-C-A*, Sara Farb's solo show at Theatre Passe Muraille, as well as a new "dramatized concert" by Tom Allan entitled *Missing Pages*. In the fall of '18, he is directing Brecht's *The Caucasian Chalk Circle* for the graduating class at George Brown College, and in early '19, a new opera for Tapestry Opera written by Julie Tepperman and Chris Thornborrow entitled *Hook Up*, about rape culture and sexual consent at Canadian universities.

As a writer, he wrote or co-wrote: *2 Pianos 4 Hands*, *Sibs* (also made into a TV movie for the CBC), *The Theory of Relatives, i.d.*, *Letters from Lehrer*, *Care* and *Soft Pedaling*. Currently, he is co-writing a play with David S. Craig entitled *Athabasca* about Big Oil, climate change, and the nature of protest in this country. He has taught acting, directing and play creation at almost all of the major theatre training institutions in Canada, including the National Theatre School of Canada, University of Alberta, Ryerson University, and Humber College, amongst many others.

He has won numerous Dora awards as an actor, director, and producer, and several Chalmers playwriting awards. He lives in Toronto.

DIRECTOR / PRODUCER (CONVERGENCE THEATRE)

Aaron Willis is an actor, director, educator, and co-founding artistic director of Convergence Theatre (with Julie Tepperman). **Selected Directing:** *Meet Cute* (Roseneath Theatre, Dora nomination), *Stupidhead! A Musical Comedy* (Theatre Passe Muraille), *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (George Brown Theatre School) *The Unending* (Convergence/Fringe 2016), *The Testament of Mary* (Soulpepper), *The Thing Between Us* (mcguffin company), *Who's Your Daddy?* (Crow's Theatre), *The Crucible* (Theatre Erindale/UTM), *Danny and the Deep Blue Sea* (Baro Theatre) *Passion Play* (Convergence/Outside the March/Sheep No Wool), *Miss Caledonia* (Tarragon Theatre), *When The Ice Breaks* (Down n Out Productions/Campbell House Museum), *Other People* (Mutual Friends Co-op), *YICHUD (Seclusion)* (with Richard Grenblatt, Theatre Passe Muraille/Convergence Theatre), *The Gladstone Variations – The Tearful Bride* (Convergence Theatre, Dora nomination), *AutoShow* (Convergence Theatre/Toronto Fringe 2006). **Teaching:** Aaron has taught with The Stratford Festival, the Luminato Festival, Ryerson University's ACT II Studio, Humber Theatre School, UTM/Sheridan, George Brown Theatre School and the Toronto Fringe (T.E.N.T.) and SummerWorks (SLIP) Festivals. **Other:** Aaron was a Metcalf Foundation Producing Intern at Canadian Stage for the 2015-16 season. He was Assistant Director on *EVITA* (2010) and *Much Ado About Nothing* (2012) at the Stratford Festival's Michael Langham Workshop for Classical Theatre Direction. Aaron has a BA Honours in Drama from the University of Alberta and is a graduate of George Brown Theatre School. **Up Next:** Aaron will be acting in the Modern Times production of Anton Chekhov's *The Cherry Orchard* in April 2019.

DRAMATURGE / PRODUCER (CONVERGENCE THEATRE)

Julie Tepperman is an actor, playwright and educator, as well as co-artistic director (with Aaron Willis) of Convergence Theatre, thrice listed by NOW Magazine as the "Best Site-Specific Theatre Company in Toronto". **Selected playwrighting:** *The Unending (a re-imagining of Strindberg's The Stronger and What Doesn't Kill You...)*; *YICHUD (Seclusion)* (published by Playwrights Canada Press; Convergence/Passe Muraille/Magnetic North), *I Grow Old* (as part of *The Gladstone Variations*; Dora nomination); *ROSY* (as part of *AutoShow*); a re-imagining of the August Strindberg play *The Father* (Winnipeg Jewish Theatre). Julie was Playwright-In-Residence at Theatre Passe Muraille in 2010/11 with the support of the Canada Council, and was a participant in the Stratford Festival's 2017 Playwrights' Retreat. She has participated in Musical Stage Company's Noteworthy, and Tapestry Opera's LibLab, and has received multiple development grants for her work from the Toronto, Ontario and Canada Arts Councils. **Other:** Julie teaches playwriting at UofT and Ryerson University's Act II Studio, was Board President of Generator for three years, and is a proud recipient of a 2016 Harold Award for her work in indie theatre. **Recently:** *BRANTWOOD* – a 15hr. immersive choose-your-own-adventure musical that has audiences following characters all over an abandoned high school – co-created, written and directed with Mitchell Cushman (originally commissioned by Sheridan College's Canadian Musical Theatre Project). **Up Next:** Julie continues to collaborate with composer Christopher Thornborrow and dramaturge-director Richard Greenblatt on *Hook Up*, a new work commissioned by Tapestry Opera, which will be part of Tapestry and Theatre Passe Muraille's 2019 season. Act One of *The Preposterous Predicament of Polly Peel*, her musical in-development with composer Kevin Wong, will be at the 2018 Toronto Fringe, as a proud recipient of The Paul O'Sullivan Prize for Musical Theatre.

IMMERSIVE SET DESIGN & COSTUMES

Anahita Dehbonehie is a performance designer, production designer and visual artist currently based in Toronto. Her practice is founded on the principle that works of art return us to truths more powerfully by their relationship to evocative sensory experiences. Her work has been featured at the Prague Quadrennial, The Vilnius Capital of Culture, and the

Moscow Museum of Modern Art. Previously, She created sculptures and designed shows in Norway, Iceland, Russia, the United States and the Czech Republic.

Since coming home she has collaborated with several Canadian companies in stage and film. Throughout her time in Toronto Anahita has been recognized with a variety of nominations and awards in design. In 2015 she was named one of the top 10 theatre artists in Toronto by NOW Magazine. Her work as an art director and production designer has been seen in festivals internationally.

LIGHTING DESIGN

Jennifer Lennon Jennifer Lennon is a Toronto-based lighting designer for live performance. Recent theatre credits include: *Escaped Alone* (Soulpepper), *Flying Hearts* and *Old Man and the River* (Theatre Direct), *Candide* (George Brown), *The Last Christmas Turkey* (Theatre Orangeville), *Concord Floral* (Theatre Kingston), *Stupidhead!* (Theatre Passe Muraille), *The Millennial Malcontent* (Tarragon), *Walk Me To the Corner: An Evening with Brent Carver* (Harold Green Jewish Theatre Company), *The Container* (Theatre Fix), *Bombay Black* and *Banana Boys* (Factory Theatre), and *The Twelve-Pound Look* (Shaw Festival). Opera credits include *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*, *Fete Galante*, *The Boatswain's Mate*, and *Die Fledermaus* (Opera 5). She is the recipient of one Dora Award and is a member of the Associated Designers of Canada.

SOUND DESIGN & FIGHT DIRECTION

Richard Lee is an award-winning actor, fight director, sound designer and theatre producer. His work has garnered him multiple Dora Mavor Moore nominations out of which he has received three: One for his Sound Design work on *paper SERIES* (Cahoots Theatre Company) and Two in performance; *Sultans of the Street & Cinderella: A Ratical Retelling* (both for Young People's Theatre). Other selected theatre includes: *The Humans* (Citadel/Canadian Stage), *Chimerica* (co-production with RMTTC), *King Lear*, *Twelfth Night*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (SiHP 2017, 2017, 2012). *Kim's Convenience* (Soulpepper), *Acquiesce* (Factory Theatre).

ASSOCIATE PRODUCER / MARKETING & PUBLICITY

Geneviève Trottier is an actor, creator & producer. She most recently co-produced *Asking For It* (In Association, in association with Crow's Theatre, Nightwood Theatre & Necessary Angel Theatre Company) and currently works as an associate of Marquis Entertainment where she has assisted on numerous productions including *Arrabal* (Mirvish/Marquis Entertainment), *2 Pianos, 4 Hands* (The Globe, Centaur, The Grand, Neptune), *Measure for Measure*, *The Winter's Tale* and *LEAR* (Groundling Theatre) as well as several of Ross Petty's yearly pantos. SELECTED ACTING CREDITS INCLUDE: *Ibsen's Ghost* (Theatre Inamorata), *Fever/Dream* (Seven Siblings Theatre), *Hansel and Gretel* (Cow Over Moon Children's Theatre / Toronto Fringe Festival), *A Madhouse Dramey* (StageMage/Toronto Fringe Festival), *Liar's Club* (VisionVisage/Ottawa Fringe Festival). COMING UP: *One Left Hour: The Life and Work of Daniil Kharms* (Good Old Neon / Toronto Fringe Festival). Geneviève is a graduate of George Brown Theatre School.

CONVERGENCE THEATRE ~ COMPANY VISION

Founded in 2006, Convergence Theatre is run by **Aaron Willis** (actor-director-dramaturge) and **Julie Tepperman** (actor-playwright-dramaturge), listed as one of Toronto's "**most respected theatre duos**" by NOW Magazine.

"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 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."

PAST PRODUCTIONS

AutoShow – seven short plays that took place in actual cars. It premiered at the 2006 Toronto Fringe where it was awarded **Best New Play, Outstanding Ensemble & Outstanding Production**, and was listed **#4 in NOW Magazine's Top Ten Toronto Productions of 2006**. A new version of *AutoShow* premiered at the 2015 Kick & Push Festival at Theatre Kingston.

The Gladstone Variations – four one-act plays that had audiences chasing characters all over Toronto's historic Gladstone Hotel. It premiered at the 2007 Toronto Fringe, was re-mounted independently in 2008, receiving 4 Dora Award Nominations, and was listed **#2 in NOW Magazine's "Top Ten Toronto Productions of the Decade"**.

YICHUD (Seclusion) by Julie Tepperman, transformed **Theatre Passe Muraille** into a Synagogue for Rachel & Chaim's wedding, where the audience of wedding guests was invited to dance, drink, and meet the family for a "pre-show" wedding celebration. Following its success at the 2009 **Next Stage Theatre Festival**, *YICHUD* was part of **TPM's 2010 and 2011 seasons**, was the headliner for the 2011 **Magnetic North Theatre Festival** where it was nominated for a **Capital Critics' Circle Award for Best Production**, was listed **#5 in NOW Magazine's Top Ten Toronto Productions of 2010**, and was published by **Playwright's Canada Press**.

Passion Play by Sarah Ruhl (co-produced with Outside the March and Sheep No Wool) is a 4 hour epic drama which took place at Withrow Park and Eastminster United Church. It won the 2014 **Dora Award for Outstanding Performance by an Ensemble**.

The Unending – three plays (two by Julie Tepperman & one by Samuel Beckett) that took place at Aunties & Uncles Restaurant + 2 secret locations – a garage and a residential backyard garden. It premiered as part of the 2016 Toronto Fringe & was independently re-mounted that fall, where it was chosen as a "**Critics' Pick**" by Robert Cushman and Lynn Slotkin for 2016.

ACCOLADES: NOW Magazine readers have thrice named Convergence Theatre as the '**Best Site Specific Theatre Company in Toronto**'. Their chapter "**Necessary Producers**" was recently published by **University of Toronto Press**, and they've had articles on Immersive Theatre appear in **The Canadian Theatre Review** and **Intermission Magazine**. Convergence Theatre continues to offer **workshops in directing, playwriting and self-producing** throughout the year, as well as experiences for youth and seniors with their **Passionate Players Program**.