

GRAND ONSTAGE
PLAYBILL

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Grand
OnSTAGE

Season 17
Grand OnStage



**THIS IS THE
STORY OF THE
CHILD RULED
BY FEAR**



David has written a play for himself and a gathering of friends and strangers to read together out loud. It tells the story of the rise and fall of an imaginary civilization in an imaginary land. It's okay if you feel nervous. David is nervous too. With so much to be fearful of these days, it's best to brave this thing together. An ingenious exercise in interactive storytelling, *This Is the Story of the Child Ruled by Fear* is a poetic and participatory fable about how to live with the slowly unfolding emergencies of our time.



Participate according to your own comfort – read for a character, join the chorus, or sit back and watch – and join this humorous, cathartic exploration of our innermost private fears.





ARTISTIC TEAM

Written and performed by
David Gagnon Walker

Directed by
Christian Barry and Judy Wensel

Dramaturgy by Christian Barry

Lighting design by Christian Barry and
Tori Morrison

**Sound design, video design, and production
management by** Tori Morrison

Physical design by Morgan Melenka

Technical and design assistance by
Patricia Vinluan and Lauren Acheson

Produced by Strange Victory Performance



PRODUCTION HISTORY

Presented by Workshop West Playwrights' Theatre.

Gateway Theatre. Edmonton, AB. Jan 31 - Feb 4, 2024.

Presented by In the Soil Arts Festival.

Oddfellows Hall. St. Catharines, ON. June 16-18, 2023.

Presented by Theatre Projects Manitoba.

Théâtre Cercle Molière. Winnipeg, MB. April 28-30, 2023.

Presented by SummerWorks 2022.

Franco Boni Theatre, The Theatre Centre. Toronto, ON.
August 4-7, 2022.

Presented by Pi Theatre.

KW Studios. Vancouver, BC. June 2-4, 2022.

Presented by High Performance Rodeo 2022.

Big Secret Theatre, Arts Commons. Calgary, Alberta.
May 26-28, 2022.

Presented by Found Festival 2021.

Studio Theatre, ATB Financial Arts Barns. Edmonton, AB.
July 8-11, 2021. *Sold-out run.*

Programmed by rEvolver Festival 2021, Vancouver, BC.

[Cancelled due to COVID-19.]

Workshop presentation at BellsView Studios.

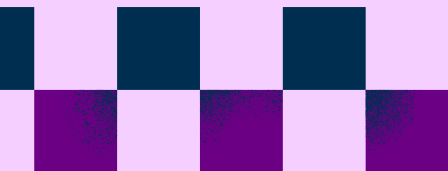
Halifax, NS. February 28, 2020.

COMPANY BIOS



David Gagnon Walker

Is an award-winning writer, performer, and theatre translator from Treaty 6 territory in Edmonton, currently living on Treaty 13 territory in Toronto. His work has been performed and developed in cities across Canada, and through residencies in Sweden, Finland, France, Australia, and the USA. Recent projects include *The Retreat* (Imago Theatre), *The Last Children* (Curtain Razors), *366 Days* (Major Matt Mason Collective), *Premium Content* (MMMC/High Performance Rodeo), and *Everybody's Everybody's Autobiography* (Verb Theatre). David was the 2019-2020 Emerging Artist-in-Residence with 2b theatre company, and the winner of the 2018 Playwrights Guild of Canada Emerging Playwright Award. His play *This Is the Story of the Child Ruled by Fear* will be published in November 2024 by Playwrights Canada Press. He is currently developing new projects supported by 2b theatre, *Nightswimming*, and Playwrights' Workshop Montréal. David also makes music as Bigfin Squid, which you can find on Bandcamp, Spotify, and Apple Music. www.davidgagnonwalker.com



COMPANY BIOS



**Tori
Morrison**

is a designer, producer, and production manager from amiskwaciwâskahikan (Edmonton, AB) on Treaty 6, currently based in Tkaronto (Toronto, ON) on Treaty 13. She is the Production Manager for Outside the March, and the Executive Director and Artistic Producer of Tiny Bear Jaws. Recent credits include sound design for WaterFall (Theatre Gargantua 2023), assistant sound design for The Importance of Being Earnest (Citadel Theatre 2023), production management for No Save Points (Outside the March 2023), and music composition for I Don't Even Miss You (Tiny Bear Jaws 2022/undercurrents 2024). Also a composer for film and TV, Tori is currently writing music for the webseries Gender? I Hardly Know Them, and recently completed the Canadian Film Centre Slight Family Music Residency. Fern, a short film she made with writer David Gagnon Walker and director Lisa Rose Snow, is available on YouTube. Find out more about what she does at www.torigmorrison.com

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“This Is the Story of the Child Ruled by Fear is pushing theatre to its limits.”

— Ben Boddez, Range Magazine

COMPANY BIOS



**Christian
Barry**

is a multi-award winning director and theatre-maker from Kijipuktuk (Halifax, NS). Christian is co-founder and artistic director of 2b theatre company. He has directed shows at festivals and theatres around the world, and was the first theatre artist to win the Nova Scotia Masterworks Award - the highest honour for the arts in the province. Directing credits for 2b theatre company include *Old Stock: A Refugee Love Story*, *The God that Comes, Revisited*, *The Russian Play*, and *East of Berlin*. Christian's productions have played at renowned venues and festivals including Bristol Old Vic, Edinburgh Fringe, Sydney Festival, Tarragon Theatre, Citadel Theatre, Magnetic North Festival, PuSh, Pittsburgh International Festival of Firsts, Noorderzon, Aarhus Festival, Theaterformen Hanover, Luminato, World Stage, and 59E59 (Off-Broadway in New York City).

www.2btheatre.com



“The divide between artist and audience becomes increasingly blurred, dynamizing the stage into a communal space for co-creation. If [this performance] proves anything, it’s that new theatrical places will continue to be explored as artists and audiences navigate the potentialities of the return to being together.”

— Derek Manderson, smART Magazine

COMPANY BIOS



**Judy
Wensel**

is a director, creator, and teaching artist based in Regina on Treaty 4 Territory. Her work emphasizes connection to place and community and through her deep interest in collaboration, she has conceived and directed numerous interdisciplinary creation-works and community art initiatives with Sask-based organizations and artists including FadaDance, Wolf Willow Band, Swamp Fest, Common Weal Community Arts, and the Cathedral Village Arts Festival. Her theatre directing work includes productions of contemporary Canadian work, ensemble-based devised creations, and new play premieres. Judy has a BFA in Acting from the University of Regina and is a graduate of the directing program at National Theatre School of Canada. She has been an Artistic Associate with Curtain Razors Theatre (Regina) since 2015 and an Associate Artist with Sum Theatre (Saskatoon) since 2019.

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“Such a brilliant idea. The piece is intimate and deeply personal. It’s also driven by big, deep questions about human purpose and the much larger, mythic forces at work in all of our lives.”

— Marcus Youssef, Siminovitch Prize-Winning Playwright,
Vancouver

COMPANY BIOS



**Morgan
Melenka**

is a visual artist based in Calgary. She uses architectural forms and materials to engage with history and place. Her 2023 shows include "A provisional vista" at the Esker Foundation's Project Space and the group exhibition "The Mall" at the Mitchell Art Gallery at MacEwan University. She was recently interviewed by Nadia Kurd for a Peripheral Review publication: "Walking Through Nonsuch: A Conversation with Morgan Melenka". She teaches visual art and is a scenic painter for film and television.

www.morganmelenka.com

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"I left the theatre, and a discussable and pleasurable evening, with a renewed appreciation that theatre, the art form of real people together in the same room sharing an experience, is on the right track. We've always known it: it's validating to have a demo from an artist, a true original, that it's meaningful, even cathartic, to tell stories together about what haunts us, scares us, weighs us down. There's wonder in it. And wonder is enlivening."

— Liz Nichols, 12thnight.ca

COMPANY BIOS



Lauren Acheson

is a trans and queer set/lighting designer and technician living in Mohkinstsis (Calgary, AB). Recent credits include: technical direction for I Don't Even Miss you (Tiny Bear Jaws), lighting design for Circus Mirandus (Alberta Dance Theatre), set/lighting design for 366 Days (Major Matt Mason Collective), production assistance for Gold Rush: Redux (High Performance Rodeo), and associate production design for Premium Content (MMMC/HPR). They can usually be found making live events happen in venues around town, or zipping around on their bike, or yelling about Star Trek... and sometimes all three at once.

www.laurenacheson.com



This is the Story of the Child Ruled by Fear was the first live performance I had the honour of seeing after the COVID-19 pandemic shuttered our performance venues. It met the audience at a particular moment in time, and I can't imagine a more perfect show to embrace an audience in this situation - it was heartfelt, hilarious, and heart-wrenching. I wasn't the only one in the audience oscillating between giggles and tears.

— Beth Dart, Edmonton

COMPANY BIOS



**Patricia
Vinluan**

is a stage and production manager based out of Kijipuktuk (Halifax, NS). She has enjoyed many roles within live event production, including; arts admin, festival coordination, production design, and technical direction. In her career, Patricia has been involved in the development of over a dozen world premieres, has collaborated on a multitude of projects presented across Canada, and has toured internationally. In her work, Patricia is dedicated to implementing sustainable and ethical production practices and is motivated by a desire to establish safe and socially responsible workspaces for all community members. She grew up on the west coast but has happily lived in Nova Scotia for nine years.

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“We all have fears and sometimes we can be brave and sometimes we can't. The play evades a simple answer. Nevertheless, the true outcome is that in the end, we have all partaken in a collective journey to create something that we don't know how it goes, and we journey together with generosity for the risk of participating. The result is a kind of vulnerable rough beauty.”

— Dr. Jenn Stephenson, PLAY: The Blog



STRANGE VICTORY PERFORMANCE

is a collaboration between writer/performer David Gagnon Walker and multimedia designer Tori Morrison. They started producing together in 2020, focusing on experimental, interdisciplinary, and interactive text-based experiences. While grounded in text-based theatre practices, Strange Victory projects have included artists and techniques from dance, circus, visual art, poetry, and digital performance. Each project is very different, but they share a basic philosophy: colliding highly personal content with new creative methods and performance forms. SVP's primary interest is the mystery of creativity itself: the movement from an impulse, to an image, to a structured artistic work, and how this movement can teach, heal, and transform the human beings it passes through.



The City of Kingston acknowledges that we are on the traditional homeland of the Anishinaabe, Haudenosaunee and the Huron-Wendat, and thanks these nations for their care and stewardship over this shared land.

Presented by Grand OnStage and the City of Kingston Arts & Culture Services Department.

Learn more about Grand OnStage at
KingstonGrand.ca.

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The City of Kingston recognizes IATSE Local 471 as
the exclusive bargaining agent for stagehands
working at Kingston Grand Theatre.
