

The Gathering

Arts Organizations Promoting Pluralism



The symposium will address the issue of equity and pluralism in the arts and will provide an exciting opportunity for arts organizations and activists to share their thoughts and concerns about the development of arts practices and an arts ecology that embeds the values of pluralism into their work.

Wednesday, 11 May 2016 | 7:00 pm - 9:30 pm

Thursday, 12 May 2016 | 9:00 am - 4:00 pm

Arts & Letters Club

14 Elm Street, Toronto, ON M5G 1G7



Agenda:

Wednesday, May 11 | 5:30 pm – 9:30 pm

6:30 pm – 7:00 pm	Registration
7:00 pm – 7:15 pm	Greetings by CPAMO Board Chair, John Ryerson
7:15 pm – 7:45 pm	Land acknowledgement and presentations by Cole Alvis and Clayton Windatt
7:45 pm – 8:00 pm	Greetings by Councillor John Filion, City of Toronto Arts Advocate
8:00 pm – 8:15 pm	Performance by Victoria Mata
8:15 pm – 8:45 pm	Overview and CPAMO presentation by Charles C. Smith
8:45 pm – 9:00 pm	Performance by Waleed Abdulhamid
9:00 pm – 9:30 pm	Networking

Thursday, May 12 | 8:30 am – 4:00 pm

8:30 am – 9:00 am	Registration
9:00 am – 9:05 am	Greetings by CPAMO Board Chair, John Ryerson
9:05 am – 9:30 am	Shula Strassfeld, Opening Exercise – Exploring Our Intent
9:30 am – 10:00 am	Jacoba Knaapen (Toronto Association of Performing Arts); Robert Sauvey (Dance Umbrella of Ontario). Facilitated by Tina Chu
10:00 am – 11:00 am	Patty Jarvis (Prologue To The Performing Arts); Kate Cornell (Canadian Dance Assembly); Rebecca Burton (Playwrights Guild Equity in Theatre); Zainub Verjee and Crystal Melville (Ontario Association of Art Galleries). Facilitated by Alicia Rose

11:00 am – 12:00 pm	Speak Out Poetry; Phyllis Novak (SKETCH); Victoria Mata (Latino Artist). Performance by poet/spoken word artist and founder of 'Writing While Black' Whitney French. Facilitated by Sheniz Janmohamed
12:00 pm – 1:00 pm	Lunch and Networking
1:00 pm – 2:00 pm	Marjorie Chan (Cahoots Theatre); Mimi Beck (CanDance Network). Performance by Ronald Taylor, YuiUgai and Shula Strassfeld. Facilitated by Kevin A. Ormsby
2:00 pm – 3:00 pm	Banoo Zan (Organizer of Shab-e She'r - Poetry Night); Sedina Fiati (ACTRA Diversity Committee); Kvesche Bijons Researcher) Facilitated by Astrid Ho
3:00 pm – 3:45 pm	Ely Rosenblum, North York Arts; Sara Meurling, (Professional Association of Canadian Theatre); Ben Donahue (Media Arts Network Ontario). Facilitated by John Ryerson
3:45 pm – 4:00 pm	Closing Comments by charles c smith

Wednesday, May 11 | Bios:

Cole Alvis, Artistic Leader, Indigenous Performing Arts Alliance

Cole Alvis is proud of their Métis-Irish heritage from the Turtle Mountains in Manitobah. An acclaimed actor, theatre creator and artistic leader, they (gender neutral) are an Artistic Producer of lemonTree creations and Executive Director of the Indigenous Performing Arts Alliance (IPAA). Select credits include “outstanding performance” in Nelly Boy as well as “outstanding direction” of Row by T. Berto at the SummerWorks Festival (NNNN’s NOW), and creator / performer in the Dora-nominated Gorey Story (The Thistle Project). As an artistic leader Cole models meaningful engagement through cross-cultural collaboration by ensuring community members maintain leadership roles in work that represents their lived-experiences. Under Cole’s leadership IPAA hosted the first national conversation on Indigenous performance in Saskatchewan (in partnership with Gordon Tootoosis Nīkānīwin Theatre), as well as a conference on Indigenous performance in the Atlantic during the Prismatic Arts Festival in Halifax, NS. IPAA’s ongoing cross-cultural projects include collaborations with Equity In Theatre (EIT), Canadian Arts Presenting Association (CAPACOA), Professional Association of Canadian Theatres (PACT) and the National Arts Centre Indigenous Theatre. Upcoming: Cole is producing & performing in Body Politic by Nick Green, a coproduction between lemonTree creations and Buddies in Bad Times Theatre (May 21st – June 12th 2016).

Twitter: @ipaaonline | Facebook: facebook.com/ipaaonline

Webiste: www.ipaa.ca | Cole Alvis Twitter handle: @Cole_Métis

Clayton Windatt

Born in St. Catherines, Clayton Windatt has lived in the Northeastern region of Ontario for most of his life and is a Métis Multi-artist. After previously working as Director of the White Water Gallery Artist-Run Centre for seven years he now works as Interim Director of the Aboriginal Curatorial Collective and as an independent curator. He works actively with several arts organizations locally, provincially and nationally on committees and boards of directors including the National Arts Service Organization’s planning committee, the Visual Arts Alliance and CARFAC Ontario. Clayton maintains contracted positions with various theatre programs and works as a writer for Muskrat magazine and Dispatch magazine. He works with the Aanmitaagzi, ON THE EDGE fringe festival, Future In Safe Hands Collective and with Business for the Arts as a Mentor for their ArtsVest program. He is a writer, designer, community engaged artist, curator, performer, theatre technician, consultant and is an active visual and media artist.

***Machete* performed by Victoria Mata, Falciony Patiño and Y Josephine**

Victoria Mata, Choreographer and Dancer

Venezuelan-Canadian choreographer, dancer, and director. Mata's career has involved self-directed training, residencies – for example at the Banff Arts Centre, Counter Pulse, African American Art & Culture, and Centro de Investigación Coreográfica del Instituto Nacional de Bellas Artes de México – and mentorships with internationally renowned choreographers such as Debbie Wilson, Nicola Pantin, and Jose Carret. Mata has been an active member of Toronto's progressive arts and activist community and is the co-founder of *MataDanZe Collective* and *conSECUENCIAS*. Mata is an audacious visionary rooted in community, inspiring risk and utilizing art as a vehicle for social change, and creating spaces to voice marginalized communities. Mata's emotive work has journeyed through Colombia, Venezuela, Cuba, El Salvador, Mexico, U.S.A. and Canada. Since completing her Masters of Fine Arts in Contemporary Choreography at York University, Mata continues to be a catalyst for artistic curiosity and the unpacking the diaspora experience by exploring migrant identities. Mata is a recipient of the Metcalf Foundation, where she is exploring a hybrid of languages in performance under the mentorship of Beatriz Pizano, Dora-award winner, playwright and director of Aluna Theatre.

Falciony Patiño, Dancer, collaborator

Born in Funza, Colombia, Patiño began his training in Colombian folk dance at the age of seven with the group Zaquesazipa, in Funza and then later with Orkeseos. He then graduated from the Superior Academy of Arts in Bogota (ASAB) from the contemporary dance department. In 2009, he moved to Toronto to join Ballet Creole as a student and as a company member. In Canada, he has performed with the Dilan Dance Company and Pollux Dance since 2011. In 2012, Patiño created Cabildo, a group that explores a contemporary approach to Colombian folk dance and was invited by Cirque du Soleil to be part of the opening Ceremony of the Pan-American games. He is currently a company member of Newton Moraes Dance Theatre and Ballet Creole, performing works by Patrick Parson and Gabby Kamino. The fusion of folk dance, contemporary, afro, urban dance, capoeira and parkour are some of the passions that drives Patiño's dancing out of the ordinary.

Y Josephine

Y Josephine is a Venezuelan singer/songwriter, percussionist, writer, and visual artist. She has presented and published her work throughout Venezuela, Aruba, Spain, UK and Canada. Best known for her distinct vocals and cajon-playing, Y has worked with such musicians as Rigel Michelena, Gustavo Dal Farra (El Rabo del Ojo), Joan Tena, Kabanayen and Des lousps. In a 4-star review in December 2007, Edinburgh's *The Skinny* (magazine) said, "Y Josephine. plays guitar, somehow gets a whole drum kit out of a Peruvian fruit box, and sings in a sweet, smoky, untouchably cool voice." In addition to her work as a performing/recording artist and as a poet, Y Josephine also studied visual art at Telford College in Scotland and was recently selected to be one of the Watah School's Artists in Residence. Since 2013, Y Josephine has been recording, performing and teaching in Ontario as part of the duo Amai Kuda and Y

Josephine, otherwise known as 'Y and Amai.' Their new CD, *AfroSoul Volume II:MaZai*, has been described by CBC's Errol Nazareth as "Earthy and rootsy and good for your ears." You can find them at www.ynamai.com, on Facebook and Youtube or check out Y Josephine's music at <https://soundcloud.com/y-josephine>. Y Josephine's latest music sensation is her new band *Baoba* an all-women funk-samba-latin-afro soul percussion group.

Performance by Waleed Abdulhamid and Naghmeh Farahmand

Waleed Abdulhamid

Multi-instrumentalist, composer, vocalist, producer and film maker, Waleed was born in Sudan. He began performing at the age of 6. In Sudan, Waleed was known for bringing traditional rhythms into popular music. When he left Sudan at age 18, he performed, recorded and toured extensively, appearing at major music festivals in Stockholm, Copenhagen, Frankfurt and Oslo as well as in Finland and Iceland. He demonstrates his versatility on guitar, bass, drums, harmonica, kirin, darabhuka, marimba, congas, djembe, dumbek and tama and has been invited to perform in festivals and conduct workshops (merging music and movement) in Spain, France, the UK and Portugal. Waleed is one of the 12 resident artists at Soulepper Theatre . He has also played and recorded with David Clayton Thomas, the Motown Legend Band "The Drifters", Doug Riley, Jackie Richardson, Julie Black, Deborah Cox and Zaki Ibrahim. Waleed is the film director of the awards winning documentary "Let's Find A Way" and has been music director of a series of shows at the Caliban Arts Theatre (Freedom Live), Inner Stage as well as with various dance companies. He has also composed and produced music for several TV shows as well some main stream movies and is the winner of a "Canada New Pioneer Award" in 2011. Waleed is a Music teacher at Humber College.

Naghmeh Farahmand

Naghmeh Farahmand the daughter of a leading master percussionist Mahmoud Farahmand has performed with many well-known ensembles in Iran and festivals around the world, Europe, Asia and North America while collaborating with Iranian TV for more than a decade. In 2010, she moved to Canada and released her solo percussion cd Unbound while collaborating with top performers of world music. She has had vast experience teaching at different institutes of music and has also conducted workshops throughout the world.

Thursday, May 12 | Bios:

Jacoba Knaapen, Toronto Association of Performing Arts

Jacoba Knaapen is a highly skilled cultural leader whose wide-ranging work in the Canadian professional arts industry spans a period of thirty years. In her current role as the Executive Director of the Toronto Alliance for the Performing Arts (TAPA), Jacoba is a champion for the performing arts and its vital and complimentary role in the greater cultural life of the city. She is deeply committed to the ongoing development and expansion of arts audiences.

Robert Sauvey, Dance Umbrella of Ontario (DUO)

DUO provides independent dance artists and enterprises with expertise and knowledge to support their artistic vision and facilitate their success.

Our services can be purchased individually or in tailored packages to suit a project's or an organization's needs – from short-term production coordination to annual management services.

Founded in 1988, Dance Umbrella of Ontario (DUO) is a non-profit, non-membership dance management and resource centre for independent dance artists and small to medium sized dance enterprises in Ontario. Our professional staff provides expertise, administrative support and services at an affordable rate including:

- accounting
- artistic/business planning
- production administration and support
- marketing and communication services
- career consultation
- art grant development, review, and filing
- board administration and facilitation
- budget analysis
- fund-raising planning
- touring support

Our offices, centrally located at Parliament and Carlton, includes fully equipped workspaces and boardroom that can be rented out by the dance community for a low monthly rate.

Website: www.danceumbrella.net | Facebook: www.facebook.com/DanceUmbrellaofOntario

Patty Jarvis, Prologue To The Performing Arts

Patty has been a member of the Toronto arts community for over 30 years and is deeply committed to arts education and community engagement. Her diverse professional experience includes developing and implementing community arts and arts enhancement projects with

Second Look Community Arts, Theatre Passe Muraille, Studio 180 Theatre and b current Performance. Working with Canadian Stage for 17 years, Patty developed numerous education and outreach programs as the Director of Audience Development and Education. Working in partnership with Creative Trust, Patty developed the 2010 PAEO (Performing Arts Education Overview) Report, a first time analysis of the scope of educational programming by Toronto arts organizations. A founding member and the current Chair of PAONE (Professional Arts Organizations Network for Education), Patty is a Board member for Ontario Presents, an Advisory Committee member for both CNAL (Canadian Network for Arts and Learning) and CPAMO (Cultural Pluralism in the Arts Movement of Ontario), sits on the Educator Advisory Committee for Studio 180 Theatre and the steering committee for CODE (Council of Drama/Dance Educators). Patty teaches the Arts Education module as part of Centennial College's Arts Management Program. She has been the Executive Director for Prologue since 2010.

Kate Cornell, Canadian Dance Assembly

Kate Cornell is a writer, arts advocate, and spokesperson based in Toronto. Kate advocates nationally on behalf of the arts sector as the Co-Chair of the Canadian Arts Coalition/La Coalition canadienne des arts. Kate has worked in arts management for a range of organizations including: the Canada Dance Festival, Toronto Dance Theatre, the CanAsian International Dance Festival, Canadian Society for Dance Studies/La société canadienne d'études en danse, DanceWorks and many more. Over the years, she has inspired thousands of children to dance with the Learning Through the Arts program and the National Ballet of Canada's education programs. In addition, Kate has taught at several university performing arts and education programs. With a PhD in Communication and Culture, her graduate research focused on Canadian cultural policy on dance at the federal level. Her research has been published in anthologies, journals, magazines, and online. Kate Cornell is the recipient of the John Hobday Award in Arts Management (2016).

Website: www.cda-acd.ca

Rebecca Burton, Playwrights Guild Equity in Theatre

Rebecca Burton is the Membership and Professional Contracts Manager at Playwrights Guild of Canada, where she also spearheads Equity in Theatre (EIT), a multi-stakeholder initiative redressing the underrepresentation of women and other marginalized communities in the Canadian theatre industry.

Rebecca has a wealth of theatre experience, having worked as a practitioner, arts administrator, educator, researcher, and editor. She wrote *Adding It Up: The Status of Women in Canadian Theatre*, the final report for a 2006 study, and more recently, she co-edited the

Winter 2016 “Equity in Theatre” issue of *Canadian Theatre Review*. In the fall, *Long Story Short*, a collection of ten-minute plays, will be released by Playwrights Canada Press.

Rebecca has a BA in theatre and history from the University of Guelph, an MA in theatre history from the University of Victoria, and she is a PhD ABD from the University of Toronto’s Graduate Centre for Drama, Theatre and Performance Studies.

Zainub Verjee, Executive Director, Ontario Association of Art Galleries

Zainub Verjee’s (Executive Director, Ontario Association of Art Galleries) work has shaped culture policy at all levels of government as well as growth of cultural institutions and organizations. As the inaugural Director, Office of Arts and Culture at Mississauga, Verjee set up the city’s first Culture Division and developed the first comprehensive Culture Master Plan. As Senior Policy Advisor, Arts Policy Branch, Department of Canadian Heritage and Program Officer at the Canada Council for the Arts, she served on cross-sectoral portfolios and developed initiatives in Digital Culture and Artist as Researcher. Prior to her work with the Federal government, she was the Executive Director at the Western Front, Vancouver, and co-founder and Co-Director of In Visible Colours. She was engaged by Gordon Campbell, Canadian diplomat and the 35th Mayor of Vancouver on his landmark Vancouver Arts Initiative, and among many appointments to Boards, she is proud of her work at the B.C. Arts Board that led to the formation of the B.C. Arts Council. She is published widely and is invited to speak nationally and internationally on culture policy, contemporary art and cultural diplomacy.

Crystal Melville, Program & Development Coordinator, Ontario Association of Art Galleries

Crystal Melville (Program & Development Coordinator, Ontario Association of Art Galleries - OAAG) is an ongoing learner and cultural advocate who works’ as a program coordinator, media artist and critical social/cultural researcher and writer. At OAAG, Crystal coordinates professional development programs including the final 3-year instalment of the Cultural Pluralism & Leadership Project. In tandem, Crystal is also completing her Master’s in Critical Cultural Geography at York University, Toronto, where she reflects on mediated youth labour futures and rites (or rights) of passage. Such interests are an extension of past work employed with Caribbean migrant farmworkers in Ontario and a media arts practice where she published on Canada’s cultural mediascape; programmed youth digital storytelling afterschool projects; presented experimental film and video works nationally; curated public media art festivals; and advocated for media arts and cultural workers. Her return to arts administration at OAAG builds upon past work advancing the visual arts, emerging artists and cultural workers through mentorship programs, communications, and advocacy.

Website: www.oaag.org | www.ontarioartsleadership.com

Phyllis Novak, Artistic Director-Founder, SKETCH

A theatre graduate of York University of Ontario, Phyllis Novak is a community arts developer who is the Artistic Director and Founder of SKETCH Working Arts. After working as an actor in the late 80's in Toronto's theatre and film industry, Phyllis became the Arts Coordinator at Evergreen, Yonge Street Mission for five years where she met the young people who became co-conspirators to create SKETCH - a community arts enterprise for youth living homeless and on the margins. Since 1996 she has been in the position of directing the cultural traffic of this emergent movement that sets the imagination and the arts as central to poverty reduction, and economic and cultural development, and positions those on the margins as leaders of social change. Celebrated as one of Global TV's Everyday Heroes, Phyllis has taken arts based practices in youth engagement to Central America, the Yukon, Ottawa, Hamilton and other urban and rural partners across Canada. Phyllis is part of the inaugural fellowship of the Toronto Arts Council Cultural Leaders Lab 2015.

Website: www.sketch.ca

Whitney French, poet/spoken word artist and founder of Writing While Black

Whitney French is a storyteller and a multi-disciplinary artist. She is a certified arts-educator who has executed over 100 workshops in schools, community centres, prisons, group-homes and First Nations' reserves. Her debut collection *3 Cities* was self-published in April 2012. Additionally, her writing has been published in *Descant Magazine* and anthologized in *The Great Black North: Contemporary African Canadian Poetry* with forthcoming work in *Canthius Journal* and *Selfish Magazine*.

Whitney French is also the founder and co-editor of the nation-wide publication *From the Root Zine*. Recently Whitney French launched the successful workshop series titled: *Writing While Black*, an initiative to develop a community of black writers. Since she transformed her findings from these workshops into a travelling lecture series having visited Montreal, New York and Pittsburgh at local and international conferences. Whitney French is self-described futurist who will be sharing her facilitation practices and theories at the Octavia Butler Legacy and Letters Conference at Spellman College in Atlanta. Her upcoming verse-novel entitled *O* is a work of science fiction chronicling the journey of a young astronaut's mission to find a new Earth.

Marjorie Chan, Cahoots Theatre

Marjorie is a multidisciplinary theatre artist based in Toronto, creating for stage and opera, as well as the artistic director of Cahoots Theatre. She has been artist-in-residence with The Banff Centre (Playwrights' Colony), Tapestry Opera, Cahoots Theatre, Theatre Direct Canada,

SUNY (Geneseo, New York) and Theatre du Pif (Hong Kong). A six-time nominee, Marjorie is the recipient of three Dora Awards, one as an actor, and two as a librettist. She has also received the K.M. Hunter Artist's Award in Theatre, as well as a Harold Award for her community contribution to the theatre industry in Toronto. As a director, Marjorie's bilingual version of *A Doll's House* in Hong Kong was awarded the distinction of Outstanding Production. Other notable nominations include the Governor General's Literary Award for her playwriting debut, *China Doll* and the Canadian Citizen Award for *Crossing Gibraltar* - Cahoots' theatre program for newcomers and refugees.

Mimi Beck, CanDance Network

Mimi Beck has dedicated her career to advancing and promoting contemporary dance. As Dance Curator for DanceWorks, Toronto's longest running contemporary dance series, she presents artists with diverse approaches to dance making, encouraging dance literacy among adults and youth. Named "One of 19 who made a difference in the arts" by The Toronto Star in 1994, she has served as a juror and assessor for arts councils and foundations. She is Executive Director and a Board Member of The Canadian Network of Dance Presenters CanDance, Canada's national arts service organization for dance presenting organizations, that strengthens the dance milieu through commissioning, advocacy and research. Honoured with a Dance Ontario Award (2007) and Harold Award (2006), Beck received the first Canada Council Grant given to a Dance Curator. From 1990 – 1994, she was Canadian director of a bi-lateral touring exchange with Dance Theatre Workshop (NY) and the U.S. National Performance Network.

***Pathways: Dialoging on Legacy* performed by Ronald Taylor, Yui Ugai and Shula**

The path of wanderers. Three dancers of different heritages come together to explore and collaborate in movement. We do our work here and all stand on the shoulders of our ancestors who came before us. We build on that legacy and leave a road map for future generations. The earliest roadmaps were the path of the sea. The path was not clear, left no trace and was often not even intentional. The sea took the traveller where it wanted. In the same way we are creating together without knowing where this voyage will take us. Our paths up to this point have been different and yet in working together, we are interested in creating a new intergenerational convergence of pathways that can lead to greater knowledge and understanding and surprising discoveries.

In exploring African, Japanese and Jewish heritage, each of the dancers will bring a piece of poetry as a starting point to which the pathway to expression will start. Let the journey begin.

Ronald Taylor

Ronald Taylor (Rehearsal Director) is a leader and innovator who embraces life at its fullest and expresses himself through movement and education. After leaving Repertory Dance Theatre led by director and mentor Astor Johnson, Ronald honed his craft with Hector Zorasspi of the Juilliard School Ensemble and graduated with a BFA which led him to the neo-classicism of

Harlem Dance Theatre. It was here that Taylor received the Dance Theatre of Harlem Scholarship Award and Maxwell and Muriel Bluck Scholarship Award. A firm believer in education and personal growth, Ronald has successfully pursued his MFA from York University. In his quest for sharing and continued excellence, Taylor was invited to perform and participate in a conference in South Africa at the University of Capetown called "Concern with the Changing Current in Dance and Music." His choreography is noted for excellence, quality and vigor.

Facebook: www.facebook.com/ronald.taylor.5686?fref=ts

Yui Ugai

Yui Ugai was born in Hiroshima, Japan. She majored in drama at high school and studied dance and music at Kobe University. Yui obtained professional ballet training at the Royal Academy of Dance (RAD) under the tutelage of Owen Montague and Joannes H. Nuyts, and she was awarded a prize for excellence in dance by the magazine, Dance Dance Dance (DDD) in 2008. Yui holds BFA in Dance from York University in Toronto. She has danced with York Dance Ensemble, Skindivers, Limitless Productions, Parahumans, The Little Pear Garden Collective, Ballet Creole, KasheDance Company, Anima Inc. and The Toronto Blue Jays. Yui also has her career as an actress and worked with the Hollywood casting director Yoko Narahashi. Yui was a heroine for the short film "Raptura" premiered in imagineNATIVE Film+Media Arts Festival at TIFF and Reel World Film Festival. In Japan, she has produced the annual dance event, "Dance Kotoen" sponsored by Nishinomiya City in order to support youth dance artists and community since 2011.

Facebook: www.facebook.com/yui.ugai?fref=ts

Shula Strassfeld

Shula Strassfeld is a Canadian dancer/choreographer who has recently returned to Toronto after nine years with Liz Lerman Dance Exchange in Washington, DC. Her intergenerational movement work has spanned the globe and she continues to work with both residents and staff at Baycrest and teaches in the Dance With Parkinsons program. She is also a guest artist with DanceTactics Performance Group in NY, an intergenerational dance company that has a strong community practice alongside its concert work.

Facebook: www.facebook.com/shula.strassfeld

Bänoo Zan, Organizer of Shab-e She'r - Poetry Night

Poet, translator, teacher, editor and poetry curator, Bänoo Zan, landed in Canada in 2010. She has been writing poetry since the age of ten and has published more than 120 poems, translations, biographies, and articles in print and online publications around the globe. Her book, *The Song of Phoenix: Life and Works of Sylvia Plath*, was reprinted in Iran in 2010. *Songs of Exile*, a collection of her poems has been recently released by Guernica Editions. She is the

founder of Shab-e She'r (Poetry Night), the most diverse poetry reading and open mic series in Toronto. Since November 2012, the series has been bridging the gap between diverse poetry communities, bringing together artists from different ethnicities, nationalities, religions (or lack thereof), ages, genders, sexual orientations, disabilities, poetic styles, voices and visions.

Facebook and LinkedIn: Bānoo Zan | Twitter: @BanooZan @ShabeSherTO

Facebook: www.facebook.com/groups/poetry.gallery.toronto/

Facebook: www.facebook.com/Shab-e-Sher-Poetry-Night-433896613462629/

Kvesche Bijons-Ebacher, Researcher

Kvesche is a community artist, fostering a range of collaborative partnerships. He has created sound and visual installation art with the Heretical Objects Cooperative, and performed and had a hand in organizing a variety of community focused festivals, arts events and local parties. He performs with Lido Pimienta and has collaborated with many artists and producers in Toronto, releasing his own mixtapes all the while.

Recently, he has co-facilitated and developed sound production workshops at sketch Community Arts, and begun interviewing and reporting for the rabble podcast network. His recent research initiated at Ryerson Faculty of Communication and Design focuses on a historical analysis of financial support to arts in areas of advocacy, equity seeking artist groups and research supporting diverse cultural practices and forms.

Ely Rosenblum, Development & Marketing Coordinato, North York Arts

Active as an arts and culture educator, Ely has directed documentary films and produced recordings for the British Library, the Smithsonian Institution, the MIT Media Lab, and CBC Radio 1. His previous projects have focused on American Sign Language performance art, West African storytelling through song, and spoken word poetry in maritime Canada. Ely trained as a documentary filmmaker at the Centre for Visual Anthropology at Goldsmiths, University of London, where he co-founded ART/E/FACT, a publication and event series of art and anthropology. He is a PhD candidate in the Faculty of Music at the University of Cambridge, where he co-convened the conference Sound Studies: Art, Experience, Politics.

Website: www.northyorkarts.org

Sara Meurling, Executive Director, PACT

The Professional Association of Canadian Theatres (PACT) is a member-driven organization that serves as the collective voice of its members. For the betterment of Canadian theatre, PACT provides leadership, national representation and a variety of programs and practical assistance

to theatre. Companies. Sara Meurling has had a thirty year career in theatre producing and arts management at organizations such as the Theatre Centre, the Dance Umbrella of Ontario, the Young Centre for the Performing Arts and Factory Theatre, as well as numerous other organizations. Her community work has included: juror, advisor and committee member, and as Member of the Board of a number of organizations including STAF, Theatre Gargantua, the Toronto Alliance for the Performing Arts, and as a member of the Toronto Arts Council Theatre Committee. Sara has been PACT's Executive Director since September 2014.

Website: www.pact.ca

Ben Donahue, Media Arts Network Ontario

Ben Donoghue is a filmmaker and arts administrator living in Toronto. He is currently working on a number of film and audio works and a range of curatorial initiatives. In addition to his independent practice Ben is currently the Director of the Media Arts Network of Ontario / Réseau des arts médiatiques de l'Ontario (MANO/RAMO), the provincial arts service organization supporting the media arts sector. He previously worked in numerous positions within artist-run culture including as the Executive Director of the Liaison of Independent Filmmakers of Toronto (LIFT) from 2007 – 2013. Ben has served on the boards of many arts and social justice organizations across the country, he is also a founding collective member of Indigenous Routes, an interactive media project working with Indigenous youth in mobile, gaming and new media platforms.