



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: May 31, 2019
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BUDDIES IN BAD TIMES ANNOUNCES ITS 2019/20 SEASON

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TORONTO: May 31, 2019. Artistic Director **Evalyn Parry** announced the line-up for Buddies in Bad Times Theatre's 2019/20 season today. After a blowout 40th anniversary season, the theatre company focuses on its role as an incubator for new queer works, with a mainstage production of one of its residency projects, an expanded showcase for its resident artists, and a new curation format for the Rhubarb Festival.

In announcing the season, Parry remarks: "I am immensely proud of the award-winning, groundbreaking queer work that has come out of the Buddies Residency Program, now going into its 10th year. This season, while some of that work travels across the country and across oceans, at home we devote increased resources to developing our next crop of vital queer artists and projects in residency. Meanwhile, on our main stage artists navigate the thorny territory of relationships: lovers, besties, hook ups, spouses, pickups, and partners, and the ensuing power struggles, sex, games, politics, role plays, magic, fights, mix ups, murders and breakups."

Parry directs the company's mainstage production, **Jenna Harris' *Mine*** – as their relationship begins to fall apart, two women trace the history of their shared past. Since its presentation at the Next Stage Festival in 2015, *Mine* has been developed by Harris as part of the Buddies Residency Program. This brand-new production of *Mine* stars **Vanessa Dunn** (of Vag Halen and the 2016 film *Portrait of a Serial Monogamist*) and **Annie Briggs** (best known for the web series *Carmilla*), and features an innovative set by accomplished designer **Shawn Kerwin** that brings the memories of the couple's relationship to life.

Beyond its home in Toronto's gay village, Buddies shares its work on the international stage, with the critically-acclaimed ***Kiinalik: These Sharp Tools*** performing at the Edinburgh International Festival before returning to Canada for a presentation at Ottawa's **Great Canadian Theatre Company**, part of the **National Arts Centre – Indigenous Theatre's** inaugural season. The award-winning show is the meeting place of two people – and the North and South of our country – at the confluence of colonial legacies and a changing climate. Winner of the Dora Mavor Moore Awards for outstanding new play and outstanding sound design/composition, *Kiinalik: These Sharp Tools* is a creation of **Evalyn Parry, Laakkuluk Williamson Bathory, Erin Brubacher, and Elysha Poirier** with **Cris Derksen**. In March, the critically-acclaimed ***Obaaberima*** tours to Montreal after a successful run in Buddies' 40th anniversary season, marking the show's fourth remount since its premiere in 2012. Written and performed by **Tawiah M'Carthy** *Obaaberima* is a young African Canadian's queer coming-of-age story, infusing music and movement in this "tour-de-force" performance. Additional tour dates for these shows will be announced soon.

A focus on new works development has long been an emphasis for the company, and the upcoming season highlights the works incubating in the **Buddies Residency Program**. Resident artists include playwright-in-residence **Bruce Gibbons Fell** (*The Communist Manifesto for Children*), **Bilal Baig and Angel Glady** (*Khwaja Sera*), **Yolanda Bonnell** (*White Girls in Moccasins*), **Justin Miller** (**Pearle Harbour**) (*Distant Early Warning*), **The Queer AF**

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Collective (*Undecided*), **Heath V Salazar** (*Antecristo*), **We Other Sons Collective** (*What's Done, Must Come*), and **Leah Lewis and Robert Chafe** (*The Dialysis Project*). These artists will be working with Buddies throughout the season, leading up to an Open Studios sharing in May: for three weeks, resident artists will be taking over the building to create, experiment, and engage audiences in the development of their work.

For the fourth year, Buddies partners with **Native Earth Performing Arts** for the **2-Spirit Cabaret** in November as part of the *Weesageechak Begins to Dance Festival*. The one-night-only event, curated and hosted by **Michaela Washburn**, celebrates the strength, beauty, and talent of queer and 2-Spirit Indigenous people. In February, the Rhubarb Festival returns for its 41st year. Under the leadership of new Festival Director **Clayton Lee**, the festival introduces a curatorial collective comprised of **Vanden Boomen, Theresa Cutknife, Claudia Edwards, Victoria Mata**, and Lee. Taking a decentralized approach to curation, the collective will both articulate the vision for the festival and support artists through the process. This initiative is made possible through the support of partners **Aluna Theatre, FADO Performance Art Centre, Native Earth Performing Arts**, and **Workman Arts**.

In addition, Buddies welcomes six productions from a variety of Toronto companies. **Obsidian Theatre** presents a production of **Antoinette Nwandu's** *Pass Over*, and regular season partner **Nightwood Theatre** mounts a new play by **Andrea Scott and Nick Green, Every Day She Rose**. **Theatre Rusticle** reimagines another classic in their unique style with *Midsummer Night's Dream*, while **timeshare performance** brings their Summerworks hit, **Brian Francis'** ensemble piece *Box 4901*, to Buddies. **Alice Birch's** explosive feminist text, *Revolt. She Said. Revolt Again*, gets a production by **Discord and Din Theatre** and **Soundstreams** remounts their acclaimed production of *Musik für das Ende*, featuring the music and story of queer Quebec composer **Claude Vivier**.

2019-20 SHOW LISTINGS

An **Obsidian Theatre** production

PASS OVER

by **Antoinette Nwandu**

directed by **Philip Akin**

starring **Kaleb Alexander, Alex McCooeye + Brandon Mcknight**

October 22 – November 10, 2019

Moses and Kitch stand around on the corner – just passing time and hoping that maybe today will be different. As they dream of their promised land, a stranger wanders into their space with his own agenda and derails their plans. Emotional and lyrical, *Pass Over* crafts everyday profanities into poetic and humorous riffs, exposing the unquestionable human spirit of young men who are stuck in a cycle and looking for a way out.

Native Earth Performing Arts in partnership with **Buddies in Bad Times Theatre** presents

2-SPIRIT CABARET

curated and hosted by **Michaela Washburn**

November 16, 2019



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Back for a third year, the 2-Spirit Cabaret is a celebration of the strength, beauty, and talent of queer and 2-Spirit Indigenous people. Buddies and Native Earth present an evening of performances, music, and spoken word as part of Weesageechak Begins to Dance 32 – Native Earth's annual festival of Indigenous works.

A **Nightwood Theatre** production

EVERY DAY SHE ROSE

by **Andrea Scott + Nick Green**

directed by **Andrea Donaldson + Sedina Fiati**

November 23 – December 8, 2019

The personal becomes political in this collaboratively created new work from playwrights Andrea Scott and Nick Green. When racial and queer politics collide at the 2016 Toronto Pride parade, two best friends discover that the things that brought them together may now drive them apart. A hilarious and heartbreaking stare-down of privilege and oppression.

A **Theatre Rusticle** production

MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM

directed by **Allyson McMackon**

starring **Rick Campbell, Burgandy Code, Amanda Cordner, Michael Derworiz, Nick Eddie, Matthew Finlan, Sarah Gale, Richard Lee, Alexa Macdougall, Alexandra Montagnesse, Kwaku Okyere, Matthew Rossoff + Annie Tuma**

January 14 – 26, 2020

Shakespeare's iconic *A Midsummer Night's Dream* collides with Theatre Rusticle's imagistic and physically poetic performance style to tell a lusciously dark story about love and a world out of balance. The company's hallmark physicality bends this timeless fantasy, shattering the dusty myths and offering an intimate new view of lovers, fairies, theatre-makers, and Shakespeare.

Buddies in Bad Times Theatre presents

THE RHUBARB FESTIVAL

festival director **Clayton Lee**

February 12 – 22, 2020

Canada's longest-running new works festival transforms Buddies into a hotbed of experimentation, with artists exploring new possibilities in theatre, dance, music, and performance art. Rhubarb is the place to see the most adventurous ideas in performance and to catch your favourite artists venturing into uncharted territory.



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a timeshare production

BOX 4901

by **Brian Francis**

directed + co-created by **Rob Kempson**

starring **Brian Francis, Hume Baugh, Samson Brown, Keith Cole, Daniel Ellis, Jeff Ho, Michael Hughes, Indrit Kasapi, Daniel Krolik, Eric Morin, G Kyle Shields, Chy Ryan Spain, Chris Tsujiuchi + Geoffrey Whynot**

February 27 – March 8, 2020

In 1992, novelist Brian Francis placed a personals ad in the newspaper. In total, he received 25 responses but there were 13 letters he never responded to. Now, at a much different stage in life, Brian has written replies to those letters. Featuring a cast of 13 queer actors, *Box 4901* is a hilarious, strange, sweet, and awkward look back at how gay men used to find one another.

A **Buddies in Bad Times Theatre** production

MINE

by **Jenna Harris**

directed by **Evalyn Parry**

starring **Annie Briggs + Vanessa Dunn**

March 21 – April 5, 2020

When the life they built together starts to collapse, two women plunge themselves into a fantastical and tumultuous journey into their shared past attempting to recapture the magic in their relationship. Set on an imaginative stage design of memories come to life, *Mine* is a poetic contemplation of what happens to queer love when the lovers grow apart.

A **Discord and Din Theatre** production

REVOLT. SHE SAID. REVOLT AGAIN.

by **Alice Birch**

directed by **Jennifer Tarver**

choreographer **Susanna Hood**

April 12 – 26, 2020

An explosive feminist text that unfolds as a series of provocations, tearing apart the language, structures, and ideas that keep women trapped within a patriarchal system. Firebrand indie company Discord and Din Theatre offers a fresh perspective on this irreverent, wildly experimental, and internationally-celebrated play: a bawdy, ferocious, and galvanizing call to action for a new feminism, one that redefines the way we think about womanhood in the 21st century.



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Soundstreams presents
MUSIK FÜR DAS ENDE

composer **Claude Vivier**
directed by **Chris Abraham**
playwright **Zack Russell**

May 6 – 9, 2020

At the age of 34, Quebec composer Claude Vivier was murdered by a man he picked up in a Parisian bar. On his desk, an unfinished piece of music appeared to foretell his own death. The man and myth are inseparable from Vivier's music, driven by a dangerous life lived at the very extremes of human experience. From there, he brought back a vision of the pure sound and light of eternity. In this immersive spectacle for 10 singers, actor, keyboards, and percussion, Vivier invites performers and audience to become celebrants in a transformative ritual journey through life, death, and beyond.

On Tour

A **Buddies in Bad Times Theatre** production

KIINALIK: THESE SHARP TOOLS

created by **Evalyn Parry, Laakkuluk Williamson Bathory, Erin Brubacher + Elysha Poirier,**
with **Cris Derksen**

A concert and a conversation, *Kiinalik: These Sharp Tools* is the meeting place of two people, and the North and South of our country. Inuk artist Laakkuluk Williamson Bathory and queer theatre-maker Evalyn Parry met on an Arctic expedition from Iqaluit to Greenland. Now sharing a stage, these two powerful storytellers map new territory together in a work that gives voice and body to the histories, culture, and climate we've inherited, and asks how we reckon with these sharp tools.

Edinburgh International Festival (Edinburgh, UK) – *August 2-5, 2019*

Great Canadian Theatre Company (Ottawa, ON), a co-presentation with the National Arts Centre Indigenous Theatre – *January 22 – February 9, 2020*

A **Buddies in Bad Times Theatre** production

OBAABERIMA

written + performed by **Tawiah Ben M'Carthy**
directed by **Evalyn Parry**
live music by **Kobèna Aquaa-Harrison**

Imprisoned in Canada for committing a violent crime, a young man from Ghana tells his cellmates a story on the eve of his release. Although there is great risk in sharing his tale, he must tell it to be truly free. Through storytelling, dance, and live music, Obaaberima chronicles a young African-Canadian's journey across continents, genders, races, and sexualities.

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Montreal, QC – *March 2020*

MEDIA INFO

INTERVIEWS – Listed artists are available for interviews in English. Contact Aidan Morishita-Miki at 416-975-9130 x35 or aidan@buddiesinbadtimes.com to arrange.

ONLINE RESOURCE – For press releases, high-resolution images, b-roll, and other pertinent information visit **www.buddiesinbadtimes.com/media**

Established in 1979, Buddies in Bad Times Theatre is a professional Canadian theatre company dedicated to the development and presentation of queer theatre. The largest and longest running queer theatre in the world, Buddies has made an unparalleled contribution to the recognition and acceptance of queer lives in Canada and is Toronto's leading destination for artistically rigorous alternative theatre.