

40 YEARS OF QUEER
1979-2019
Buddies
IN BAD TIMES THEATRE

ANNUAL REPORT

10/10



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Buddies in Bad Times Theatre creates vital Canadian theatre by developing and presenting voices that question sexual and cultural norms. Built on the political and social principles of queer liberation, Buddies supports artists and works that reflect and advance these values. As the world's longest-running and largest queer theatre, Buddies is uniquely positioned to develop, promote, and preserve stories and perspectives that are challenging and alternative. Buddies achieves artistic excellence through its mainstage season programming, artist residency program, and community-based initiatives. Buddies serves a broad segment of the population who share a passion for theatre that celebrates difference.

Our Values

Buddies in Bad Times Theatre has identified three core values that serve as guiding pillars for all our activities and operations.

DIFFERENCE

With our art, we simultaneously celebrate difference and question the mechanisms through which differences are constructed and maintained. With our space, we create an accessible, non-judgmental, and inclusive environment for everyone regardless of sexual orientation, gender identity, economic position, race, creed, age, national origin, physical ability, or mental ability. With our daily interactions, we foster respect and dignity among all people.

EXCELLENCE

We provide our audiences with unforgettable theatre experiences, and we give our artists and staff the resources they need to achieve the highest standards of excellence.

COMMUNITY

We believe that the theatre plays a vital role in the educational, social, and economic health of a community. We strive to be a positive force by encouraging collaboration and constructive dialogue among the various groups and individuals who make up our community.

**TORONTO'S LEADING
DESTINATION FOR
ARTISTICALLY
RIGOROUS
ALTERNATIVE
THEATRE AND A
WORLD LEADER IN
DEVELOPING QUEER
VOICES AND STORIES
FOR THE STAGE**

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Artistic Director's Message

40 Years of Queer

Buddies' 40th anniversary season was a year-long celebration of our history, our present, and our future. It was a season packed with ambitious, innovative creation both on and off-stage, engaging our communities within and beyond the walls of our theatre.

The mainstage season featured two remounts from Buddies' recent history, reimagined a queer classic with a team of Black and Indigenous artists, and premiered the tenth work developed in our Residency Program. In the cabaret we hosted a historic play reading and several impassioned community Long Table conversations, and ended the season with an unforgettable, full-facility birthday bash: *The Future is Queer*.

Partnerships continue to be an important way that Buddies forges meaningful connections between our queer mandate and other equity-seeking companies. The annual 2-Spirit Cabaret, in collaboration with Native Earth Performing Arts, moved to the main stage, and we welcomed Catherine Hernandez as the new director of the Emerging Creators Unit, in partnership with b current performing arts.

Across town from Buddies, at the Oakwood Village Library, *The Youth/Elders Podcast* carved space for queer intergenerational conversation. Across the country, our production of *Kiinalik: These Sharp Tools* played to rave reviews and then made history with Buddies' first appearance at the world-renowned Edinburgh International Festival.

At the close of this historic season, I couldn't be more proud of this resilient queer company and all we have achieved over the last four decades of incredible social change. Not only have we survived, we have thrived. We have built a singular queer home for artists, audiences and community, and our influence has moved far beyond our walls. And we've been able to do it because of the support we get from our community of donors, patrons and volunteers: you.

Thank you for helping us make history.

Evalyn Parry
Artistic Director

Chair's Message

It's hard to believe that it has already been six years that I've been on the board of Buddies, including two seasons as treasurer and two seasons as chair of the board. During that time, Evalyn was brought on as Artistic Director and we celebrated both the 35th and 40th anniversaries of Buddies. Since joining the board, I've attended so many amazing shows and great parties, and met too many incredible people to count. Of course, this past season was no exception.

Earlier this year as the conclusion of many months of work, the board passed its Board Inclusion Statement, enshrining our commitment to ensuring the board continues to strive to reflect the diversity of the Buddies community. We also restructured the board committees by creating a Nominating and Inclusion Committee so that meaningful inclusion plays a fundamental role in board recruitment.

Artistic Director Evalyn Parry and Managing Director Shawn Daudlin both continue to do an amazing job keeping the Chamber and Cabaret packed with great shows, all in support of Buddies' mission. Thanks to the continued support of Buddies' donors and funders, we continue to make much-needed repairs and improvements to the building. This year's upgrades have significantly improved the accessibility of the space, and as part of that there is a brand new, all-gender washroom (and of course an honourable mention has to go to its glitter floor).

Along with the rest of the board of directors, I am proud to be a part of this amazing theatre and to get to work with the entire Buddies community. While this will be my final year as chair of the board, I'm looking forward to continuing to be involved with the organization and with Jamie Slater taking over as chair, the board is in very good hands.

Elliot Smith
Chair, Board of Directors

2018-19 In Numbers

23,370

people came through our doors.

338

artists, designers, and technicians were employed by Buddies.

236

nights of theatre happened on our stage.

142

people accessed our youth and education programs.

80

community groups accessed our space for performances, meetings, and fundraisers.

55%

of the lead artists creating work in our season were women.

41%

of the lead artists creating work in our season were people of colour.

20%

of the lead artists creating work in our season were trans or nonbinary.

25

new theatre works were performed on our stage.

The Season at a Glance



Anna Chatterton

Gertrude and Alice

The season kicked off with a brand new production of The Independent Aunties' *Gertrude and Alice*, featuring a bold new design from visual artist Sherri Hay.

“SHERRI HAY’S SET, WITH MOVING COMPONENTS POWERED BY SAND AND GRAVITY, ALMOST SEEMS ALIVE. THE ENTIRE PRODUCTION FEELS MASTERFUL AND MODERN, LIKE THE GENIUS PAINTERS STEIN COLLECTS AND HANGS ON HER WALLS.”

-NOW Magazine



Yolanda Bonnell

2-Spirit Cabaret

Due to popular demand, our annual partnership with Native Earth Performing Arts made a jump to the main stage in 2018. For one amazing night, we came together as a community to celebrate the work of 2-Spirit and queer Indigenous artists.



Tawiah Ben M'Carthy

Obaaberima

Tawiah M'Carthy's seminal one-person show has toured across Canada, but this year was the first chance Toronto got to see it since its premiere in 2012.

We were thrilled to share this powerful performance once again. *Obaaberima* was the first show created through our residency program, beginning early development in 2009. A fitting moment for our 40th Anniversary Season.



Aaron Collier

The Rhubarb Festival

Canada's longest-running new works festival returned with another year of groundbreaking, boundary-pushing performance.

“AS A VISITING ARTIST, IT WAS A PRIVILEGE TO EXPERIENCE THE DIVERSITY, BRAVERY, AND URGENCY OF THE WORK BEING CREATED. IT IS CLEAR THAT THE FESTIVAL PLAYS A CRUCIAL ROLE IN DEVELOPING AND NURTURING ARTISTS IN TORONTO.”

-Jenn Blake, Program Manager, Campbelltown Arts Centre, Sydney Australia



Johnnie Walker, Anders Yates + Kwaku Okyere

Shove It Down My Throat

Johnnie Walker's epic queer-bashing mystery became the tenth mainstage show to come from our residency program when it premiered in 2019. An ensemble of queer performers gathered in a recreation of the Buddies dressing room to grapple with issues of homophobic violence and who gets to tell our history.

“NOT JUST GLORIOUSLY THEATRICAL, IT IS GLORIOUSLY GAY.”

-My Gay Toronto



Alexander Chapman + Walter Borden

Lilies

The season capped off with a massive production of Michel Marc Bouchard's seminal queer love story with a cast of queer Black and Indigenous actors in a stunning new production from lemonTree creations.

“SHEDS NEW LIGHT ON A CLASSIC PLAY THAT WE THOUGHT WE KNEW. IT IS, AS THE COUNTESS DE TILLY HERSELF MIGHT PUT IT, THRILLINGLY AUDACIOUS.”

-Globe & Mail

Community + Education Programs

Our Queer Youth Arts Program went through a transformation in 2018-19 to better serve our evolving queer communities, and continue the vital intergenerational conversations that began in *The Youth/Elders Project*. Program curator Daniel Carter launched a revitalized year-round program of artist workshops, open studio Creation Gyms, conversations, and a new format for our emerging artist showcase, *QueerCab*. We even took the show on the road with *The Youth/Elders Podcast* recording its first season at the Oakwood Village Library.

WHAT EXCITED YOU ABOUT THE IDEA OF LEADING BUDDIES' COMMUNITY AND EDUCATION PROGRAM?

I think Buddies represents many things for many people aside from a theatre. It's a club. It's a school. It's a dark room. It's a community space. It's the first step in a career path. It's a healing space. It's where you reunite with family and friends.

The opportunity to play a part in creating some of these spaces through activities under the Community and Education Program for people to come together is a really special opportunity. Seeing people connect with each other about what's going on in their communities and in their arts practice and build upon those connections is a very fulfilling experience.

This past year we were able to expand the building of these spaces beyond the walls of Buddies and take up space outside of the Village at the Oakwood Village Library. I think that's important and necessary, especially now when space is so precarious and the feeling of safety while authentically expressing your identity is under threat. It was exciting to pilot a project that consciously queered spaces outside a queer institution or neighbourhood.

WHAT INSPIRED THE INCEPTION OF THE CREATION GYMS?

There were a few reasons. Above all, I think creating access to physical space for young and emerging queer folks is an invaluable resource.

It's just space. That you can use. For free. To do what you need. It's not a program that you have to commit to. It's not an energy exchange. It's a time and space for yourself to focus on your art-making. To write. To dance. To record an audition. To bring in your friends and read a script. To rehearse. To test things out in front of people.

It's a small, small thing. But it also means saving forty or sixty dollars, and carving out a physical and mental time in your day to focus on your artmaking, which helps.

DO YOU HAVE A STAND-OUT MOMENT FROM THE YOUTH/ELDERS PODCAST?

There was one moment where a younger attendee was recalling their home and what that meant to them. They specifically recalled their relationship to their mother, and how that was a strong connection to "home." This person shared that their mother had passed away, and the impact that had on them and their connection to home.

At the end of the session, an older participant embraced the younger participant and they connected. It was a clear example of how we come together as a community, support each other, and become each other's family – especially when we are displaced, removed, or have abandoned our "home".

But I also loved when library patrons would pretend to look at books or pamphlets while listening in on our conversations. And they would look at the same pamphlet for 15, 20, 30 minutes just listening. It's odd and exciting to witness them get insight into queer lives and experiences.

WHAT INSPIRED THE *IN CONVERSATION* SERIES?

The impulse to create the *In Conversation* series is similar to the impulse that created the podcast. After *The Youth/Elders Project*, there was an influx of folks asking to get involved – it was obvious there was a desire and a need to continue creating spaces for intergenerational dialogue. And so, the podcast was introduced. And after the podcast finished, there was the opportunity to continue to have this space for dialogue through the *In Conversation* series.

At the end of the day, I think it comes down to the fact that there aren't enough spaces for dialogue and connection amongst queer folks who span various generations, backgrounds, educational histories, etc. that aren't based in drinking or partying or having a degree in whatever. What *In Conversation* aims to create is a space that meets people where they are at – where you could ask questions and source knowledge from a community, and hear multiple viewpoints to inform this knowledge-building.

QUEERCAB HAS CHANGED QUITE A BIT THIS YEAR – WHAT INSPIRED THIS CHANGE?

The impetus of QueerCab remains the same – to provide a stage for emerging queer talent.

I suppose the biggest change with QueerCab was the fact that they were scaled back in terms of frequency and it moved away from an open mic to something a bit more structured with longer lead times.

These changes allowed for more time for artist outreach, more rehearsal time for the artists involved, and proper support for the artists to realize their vision. These changes have allowed the programming to be more robust - we've had installations, bands, stand up comedy, solo musicians, drag artists, spoken word, and much more; and they have brought in many new artists to the Buddies space. The move to understand "emerging" as something not bound by age also introduced older artists who have started their artistic endeavours within the past few years.

Above all, the changes give artists the time and space to plan their art-making with everything else they have going on in their lives. It provides a sort of container for new and emerging artists to work towards a goal, with help and support along the way – without an expectation of perfection.

LeZlie Lee Kam



We first met LeZlie in 2016 during *The Youth/Elders Project*, and we are so glad we did. LeZlie has been a mainstay of our ongoing intergenerational work, connecting us with a vibrant community of queer elders. LeZlie formally joined the Buddies team as a Community Arts Facilitator this year, working on our *In Conversation* series and *The Youth/Elders Podcast*, which was recorded live at the Oakwood Village Library every week in the fall of 2018.

"The opportunities were vast - we had older queer people dropping in, who lived in the neighbourhood, and told us that they were excited to see that their local library was promoting queer conversations.

Many of the queer youth of colour told me they were happy to see and hear from a queer elder of colour, as they had no previous role models. And many of the queer youth who attended told me they found it helpful hearing about my lived experiences, and they were no longer afraid, it gave them hope that they also could have a vibrant queer life as they got older."



Emerging Creators Unit

It was a big year for one of our favourite programs, The Emerging Creators Unit. We welcomed five incredible artists - Brock Hessel, Jade Walker, Kasden Leo Indigo, Ophira Calof, and Shohana Sharmin into the program, as well as a new program director, Catherine Hernandez.

Catherine is an award-winning novelist and playwright — with hits like *The Femme Playlist* and *Scarborough* — whose work has been on many stages in Toronto including our own. Catherine is also the artistic director of b current performing arts, who joined us as a partner organization for the Emerging Creators Unit in 2018. This partnership has been a fruitful experience, which will continue to grow in the years ahead.

“THE EMERGING CREATORS UNIT WAS ONE OF THE MOST REWARDING EXPERIENCES OF MY ARTISTIC CAREER TO DATE. THROUGH THIS PROGRAM, I LEARNED THE BASIC TOOLS FOR BRINGING AN IDEA TO LIFE – FROM WRITING TO WORKSHOPPING TO PRESENTING.

THE DRAMATURGICAL GUIDANCE AND THEATRICAL SKILLS I GAINED DURING THIS PROGRAM ARE INVALUABLE AND WILL CONTINUE TO SHAPE MY ARTISTIC PRACTICE FOR YEARS TO COME... ONE OF THE MOST IMPACTFUL THINGS I LEARNED DURING THIS PROCESS IS THAT CREATION IS AN ONGOING PRACTICE, AND AS ARTISTS WE MUST CHALLENGE OURSELVES TO CREATE BIGGER AND BETTER THINGS BY BOLDLY EMBRACING FAILURE AS PART OF THE PROCESS.”

-Shohana Sharmin

Under Construction



In the summer of 2019, we embarked on the final, and most visible, part of a three-year project to repair and upgrade our building so that Buddies can stay standing strong for generations to come.

Following on the heels of new chairs, a new roof, soundproofing, and a host of other repairs, we finally got a shiny, new, gender-inclusive bathroom. And the floor is made of glitter!

These renovations have been vital to Buddies' future, and would not have been possible without the hundreds of donors who supported the work.

In particular, we want to thank Ward 13 city councillor Kristyn Wong-Tam, the City of Toronto, and the Ontario Trillium Foundation for making this last phase of construction possible.

Dyke City



In January, the original cast of Sonny Mills' *Dyke City* reunited for a one-night only reading of the iconic lesbian play. Moynan King, Kathryn Haggis, and Sarah Garton Stanley were joined by a trio of young queer women to read parts 1 and 3 from the *Dyke City* series.

“BEING RE-UNITED WITH THE ORIGINAL DYKE CITY CAST WAS LIKE FALLING ASLEEP AND WAKING UP IN A FACEBOOK FANTASY. IT WAS A BIT LIKE PUTTING ON YOUR FAVOURITE ARTICLE OF CLOTHING AFTER DECADES WITH ALL THE FEELS THAT EVERYTHING AND NOTHING HAS CHANGED. WORKING WITH A NEW GENERATION OF QUEER PERFORMERS FELT LIKE SOME KIND OF LIVE LITMUS TEST OF: COMEDY, TEXT AND TIME. THE DIVERSITY OF CASTING WAS A STROKE OF SHEER GENIUS AND WHAT AN INCREDIBLE CELEBRATION OF THE ABSOLUTE BRILLIANCE OF SONNY MILLS.”

-Kathryn Haggis



Artist Profile

Johnnie Walker

After five years in residency, Johnnie premiered his epic new work *Shove It Down My Throat* in April

WHAT WAS IT LIKE TO FINALLY PUT *SHOVE IT DOWN MY THROAT* ON STAGE?

Shove had the longest development period of any play I've written. When the process is that long, and you have years of writing and researching and workshopping and planning, you can almost forget sometimes that the goal is an actual production!

It's such a big play and it goes to some very uncomfortable places and also some very ridiculous places and it's a strange and frequently challenging journey we're inviting the audience to join us for. Not to mention the fact that it's a show that requires me to be onstage for virtually the entire duration! But there's a David Bowie quotation I come back to frequently: "If you feel safe in the area you're working in, you're not working in the right area. Always go a little further into the water than you feel you're capable of being in. Go a little bit out of your depth. And when you don't feel that your feet are quite touching the bottom, you're just about in the right place to do something exciting." Shove is the most ambitious piece of theatre I've ever worked on, and there were certainly many times during its development when I felt woefully out of my depth. And I'm very grateful for that, because it absolutely wound up being the most exciting project I've ever worked on.

I think the most rewarding aspect of having done the production is the kinds of interactions I had with people after they'd seen the show. People would stop me on my way out of the dressing-room for long conversations about their thoughts and feelings on the show. It's always gratifying to experience people really engaging and grappling with your work, but there was something about effort and the seriousness with which people felt compelled to respond to me personally after seeing the show that was deeply satisfying and energizing.

THE SET FOR THE SHOW WAS MODELLED AFTER THE DRESSING ROOMS AT BUDDIES. WHAT INSPIRED THIS DESIGN CHOICE?

A large amount of the show was written in those dressing rooms. As part of my residency with *Buddies*, Mel set me up with "office hours" in the dressing rooms and the more time I spent there, the more the space began to seep into the text. I noticed that when I mentioned writing in the dressing rooms to other people who had spent time in them, they lit up.

All dressing rooms are a little bit magical, but there's a very particular queer magic going on in the *Buddies* dressing rooms: the walls lined with posters from recent seasons and posters from before I was born; the tables embedded with stains from old glitter, nail polish, and lipstick; the lightbulbs sheathed in those funny little cages. Ultimately, I think the choice works because it's specific. For people who know the space intimately, seeing it recreated and celebrated and sent up is delicious. For people who've never seen it before, they still get it, because they can feel its specificity. You can gag for the realness even if you don't get the reference.

HOW DID THE WORK CHANGE THROUGH THE WORKSHOPS INTO THE PRODUCTION?

Enormously. It was always a show about what happened to Luke and it was always a show about what happened to me when I tried to find out what happened to Luke. Everything else was always in flux. We knew there was a chorus of queer archetypes who would both reenact Luke's story and comment on it as they went, but how many there would be and which archetypes they would represent changed as we tried out different drafts of the script with different groups of performers.

For Act One, the nuts and bolts of what was going to happen, what parts of the story we were going to tell, how it would start, and how it would end were pretty much in place from the beginning. What changed was the journey there, the relationships between the different members of the chorus, when they would help Johnnie, and when they would hinder his quest. And a lot of that clicked into place once we made the decision to use the *Buddies* dressing-room as the location for Act One.

Act Two went through the biggest changes. The truth is, *Shove It Down My Throat* is essentially two different inter-connected plays about the same subject, and by the time we get to the intermission, the first play has been resolved. It didn't make sense to go back to the dressing-room or the chorus or any of the things we'd become comfortable with in Act One.

In Act One, Johnnie is essentially sorting through other people's research about Luke, but in Act Two, Johnnie dives headfirst into the rabbit-hole of his own (or, you know, my own) research on the case. And one of the tricky things about researching a play for years is that you wind up with a lot of information. A lot of fascinating information. Tragically, too much fascinating information to squeeze into a tolerable evening of theatre!

And so the process there really became discovering what information was essential, and what we could do without. The order of scenes changed a lot. Scenes that began as verbatim interview transcripts veered wildly into the surreal. Some very funny comedic sequences that, sadly, didn't really have much to do with anything got cut, and one of the strangest sequences I've ever written—the ghost of Dixie Carter appearing to Johnnie as a sort of drag queen alternative to Jacob Marley—made its way back into the script after being mercilessly excised years ago. And thank goodness for that!

One of the biggest pleasures for me every night we did the show was hearing her voice and then turning to watch the curtains part to reveal Julia Sugarbaker herself, exquisitely posed on the *Buddies* catwalk in a never-ending dress that was either lifting her up to heaven or dragging her down to hell. I think it was the best magic trick I've ever been a part of.



Artist Profile

Jenna Harris

Jenna has been an artist in residence at Buddies for three years, including a year as our Playwright-in-Residence, developing her new show Mine. Look for Jenna's work to hit the stage later this year when Mine premieres in the spring of 2020.

HOW HAS THE RESIDENCY PROGRAM HELPED SUPPORT YOUR ARTISTIC DEVELOPMENT?

I don't know that I could ever have the words to even begin to accurately describe how being part of this residency program has helped to support my artistic development. It has just been more than I could have ever hoped for! Between the guidance and kindness given to me on the piece by Evalyn and Mel Hague, to the support of the other folks in the program, I have grown so much as a playwright, which has given me the confidence to not only take on new artistic challenges, but also inspired in me a whole new way of approaching my playwriting, which is thrilling and makes me excited for what the future will hold.

DO YOU HAVE A MOST MEMORABLE MOMENT FROM THE RESIDENCY PERIOD?

I have so many memorable moments!

I think to bookend the experience, to start with, the moment sitting with Evalyn in her office when she asked if I was interested in being part of the residency program. And not only that, that she was open to me investigating this piece within the program even though it had already had an independent production at the Next Stage Theatre Festival.

After producing this play in 2015, I knew that it wasn't finished, but that I would also need support to realise its full potential, and being offered the opportunity to do so – with Evalyn and Mel and at Buddies – was a dream come true.

Secondly, visiting set designer Shawn Kerwin's studio in the spring to see a model for the set for the first time was incredible! It made this whole process, and the play, tangible, and made it real that we were moving from development to production.

WHAT ARE YOUR NEXT STEPS FOR THE PIECE YOU'RE DEVELOPING?

Evalyn will be taking the piece through a design workshop with the actors (Vanessa Dunn and Annie Briggs) and Shawn in the fall at Buddies. This workshop will be focused on some of the design elements that are written into the script, and how the actors interact with these elements.

After this workshop, Evalyn will be leading the team towards the piece's production in March/April 2020!

HOW DID YOU COME TO WORK WITH YOUR ARTISTIC TEAM?

I started working with Evalyn and Mel on this piece three years ago when I received funding from the Ontario Arts Council to become a Playwright-in-Residence at Buddies for the season. Through this residency, as well as being part of the Buddies' Artist Residency program, this piece was developed to the point where it was felt ready for production.

At this time, Evalyn took the helm as its director and brought on board a fantastic team of designers and an incredible cast.

On Tour



The smash hit show *Kiinalik: These Sharp Tools* hit the road in 2018-19, visiting important international festivals in Vancouver and Toronto, and playing to sold out audiences in Iqaluit. The tour also marked the first international tour dates for Buddies with a stop at the world-renowned Edinburgh International Festival, sparking a global interest in the show that will see continued touring around the world in the years ahead.

“Shakes the audience to the core”

-The Scotsman (UK)

“Rich, thoughtful, and impassioned”

-The Guardian (UK)



Artist Profile

Justin Miller

Known for his alter-ego Pearle Harbour, Justin joined the Buddies Residency Program in 2016 and has appeared regularly on our cabaret stage while working on his latest show *Distant Early Warning*

HOW HAS THE RESIDENCY PROGRAM HELPED SUPPORT YOUR ARTISTIC DEVELOPMENT?

I was invited into the Buddies residency program to intensify the theatrical experience of *Pearle Harbour's Battle Cry*, a drag concert extravaganza that reorchestrates and reimagines historic pro-war songs for our contemporary crisis. The work continues my theatrical investigation into our dangerous attachment to toxic nostalgia, but Evalyn and Mel challenged me to deepen the attack of the work, from a jukebox, musical meditation to something more potent.

In my first year of residency, the show has been torn down over and over again, text written and rewritten and scrapped, any and all easy answers questioned and abandoned. Reborn as *Distant Early Warning*, the show interrogates personal and collective responsibility in an era of resurgent fascism (local, national, and global) and apocalyptic climate uncertainty. It is dark, urgent, and often terrifying work, and has the potential to be my most meaningful piece to date. Buddies has provided the resources, space, insight, and — most critically — the fallow time that has allowed me not just to kill my darlings, but reap what has grown from their remains.

DO YOU HAVE A MOST MEMORABLE MOMENT FROM THE RESIDENCY PERIOD?

Playing dramaturgical whack-a-mole with Lauren Gillis (director), Steven Conway (musical director), and Adam Lazarus (artistic consultant) long after our brains had melted out of our ears and onto the floor; marvelling at the sheer musical genius that is the D.E.W. band (Conway, musicians Emma & Sara Bortolon-Vettor) to twist old-timey melodies into beautiful, brutal, and haunting new arrangements; the relief when the uncanny despair of “oh god the show is in five days and everything is terrible and makes no sense” shifts to “hey this is actually a thing and it’s a pretty goddamn cool thing to boot.”

WHAT ARE YOUR NEXT STEPS FOR THE PIECE YOU’RE DEVELOPING?

Have it spiral out of control to deeper, darker depths than Pearle Harbour has ever visited before. Should be fun!

Development continues into our second year of residency, with our focus extending beyond text into greater craft and specificity of design elements. We aim to gradually, sonically, and viscerally overwhelm our audience through insidious sound design, subtly shifting projection, and pounding rhythms. Like the frog in the boiling pot, the show enacts the creeping fascism we only recognize (and feel) too late. Pearle’s natural rapport with audiences, and their instinctive trust in her, will create a complex gathering point for community.

HOW DID YOU COME TO WORK WITH YOUR ARTISTIC TEAM?

I’m lucky to be working with equal parts longtime collaborators (musical director Steven Conway), old friends (director Lauren Gillis, musicians Emma & Sara Bortolon-Vettor) and heroes (artistic consultants Karen Hines and Adam Lazarus). All of us share a critical, core belief that theatre needs to be truly live, not just for its audience, but with its audience, that their presence must be earned by their active contribution to the drama.

Our Queer Is



All year long, we invited our community to participate participatory public art project called Our Queer Is...

We wanted to celebrate the possibilities of this beautiful and contentious word, and remind everyone at Buddies that our queer is inclusive and that we are all invited to see ourselves in it.

“QUEER IS A SHIFT IN PERSPECTIVE: A SHAKE OF THE SHOULDERS, OR A PUSH IN ANOTHER DIRECTION. PEOPLE LIVING IN OUR STRAIGHT SOCIETY GO TO QUEER THEATRE AND WITNESS OTHER POSSIBLE FUTURES.”

-Our Queer Is... project submission

See more about the project at buddiesinbadtimes.com/OurQueerIs



Queer Emerging Artist Award Winner

Erum Khan

The Buddies Queer Emerging Artist Award recognizes and encourages the achievements of queer artists who are founding careers in the theatre while engaging with the community

We were delighted to name theatre and film artist Erum Khan as the winner of the sixth annual Queer Emerging Artist Award.

Erum has been seen on our stage as a writer and performer many times, most recently at the 2019 Rhubarb Festival. Her play *Noor* was presented at The Aga Khan Museum in 2018. In film she has worked in various programming capacities including serving as the 2017 Festival Programming Intern at TIFF and a 2019 Film Programming Jury Member for The Rendezvous With Madness Festival. Her film, *Bajaare ka ghar*, premiered at The Toronto Independent Film Festival. She is presently a playwright for Nightwood Theatre's 2019-20 Write From The Hip program.

The Queer Emerging Artist Award was established in 2014 through a gift from the estate of John Alan Lee.

FINANCIALS

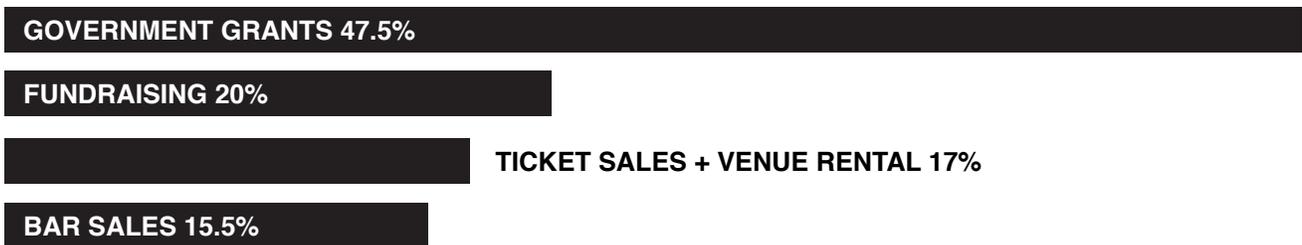
Our 40th Anniversary season ended on a solid financial note, with a modest surplus of \$5,850 after amortization. Buddies remains in a healthy financial position, with a good balance of earned income, government, corporate and private support.

Expenses in the areas of production, artist fees, and marketing were all up from the previous season due to increased artistic activity marking the 40th Anniversary, including the national and international tour of *Kiinalik: These Sharp Tools*. Overall fundraising saw a decrease of 10% this season, in part due to a change in funding from our corporate sponsor TD Bank. However, our annual fundraising event ArtAttack! saw a 35% increase in revenue, raising an all-time high of over \$82,000. We also saw strong support from both the Canada Council for the Arts and the Ontario Arts Council for our touring activity, which increased our grant revenue by more than \$70,000 from the previous fiscal. Revenue from our bar, ticket sales and venue rental continue to be stable.

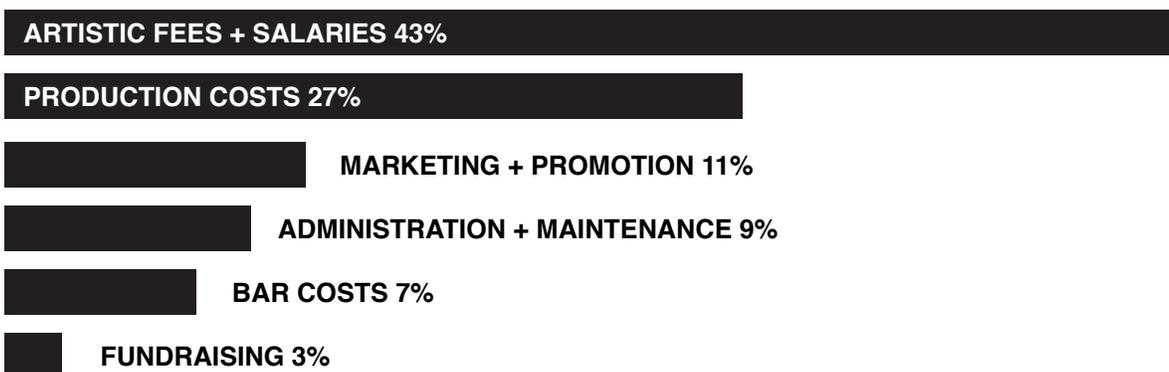
NOTE: Not included in these numbers are revenues and expenses for our Capital Improvement Project (approximately \$485,000), which we are required to track and audit separately.

Audited financial statements for the numbers listed below are available at buddiesinbadtimes.com/AnnualReport

Revenues - 1,710,525



Expenses - 1,695,915



Our Sponsors

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FESTIVAL + EDUCATION SPONSOR



MEDIA PARTNER



CORPORATE SPONSORS



PUBLIC AGENCIES



FOUNDATIONS



Our Donors

LEGACY CIRCLE

Anonymous (2)
Ed Cabell + Roy Forrester
Kenneth Charles Dawe
John Alan Lee
Russell Mathew + Scott Ferguson
Richard McLellan
Jim Robertson + Jim Scott

VISIONARIES (\$5000+)

Paul Butler + Chris Black
Brian Gibson + Terry MacPhee
Jim Lawrence + David Salak

HEROES (\$2500 – \$4999)

Russell Mathew + Scott Ferguson
Martha McCain
Adam Morrison + James Owen
Pride @ Shopify

LEADERS (\$1000 – \$2499)

Ken Aucoin + Gerald Crowell
Lawrence Bennett
Derek Billsman
Michael Boyuk
Ed Cabell + Roy Forrester
Bob Gallagher
Mark German
Craig Hanson
David M. Hendrie
William Hodge + Robert Wylie
Jim Lawrence
Martha McCain
Tom McGillis
Ken Moffatt
The NigE Gough Shine On Foundation
Mark Peacock
pjur personal lubricants
Jim Robertson + Jim Scott
The Bulmash Siegel Fund
James Tennyson
Kai Wa Yapp
Jaime Woo

listed donations from July 1, 2018 - June 30, 2019

ADVOCATES (\$480 – \$999)

Kate Bishop + Doug Gerhart
 Sheila Lynn Cavanagh
 The Charlie and Lulu Franklin Fund
 at the Calgary Foundation
 Paul Hartwick
 in memory of Matthew James Hines
 Richard Isaac
 Tim Jones + Taylor Raths
 Karim Karsan + John Rider
 Beck + Mandy McNeil
 Brian Mossop
 Pearse Murray
 Brian Sambourne
 Jamie Slater
 Louis Tsilivis
 Ayse Turak
 Lucinda Wallace + Lesley Fraser
 J. Wilkie + R. Kong

PARTNERS (\$240-479)

Anonymous
 A. Karmali + D. Arcand
 Shawn Daudlin
 Lawrence Campbell
 Naomi Campbell
 Betty Carlyle
 Donna Daitchman
 Shawn Daudlin
 Dennis Findlay
 George Grant
 Dr. Ben Louie
 Bruce Mactaggart
 Joseph McLean
 Richard McLellan
 Aidan Morishita-Miki
 Evalyn Parry
 Wes D. Pearce
 Jayne Schneider
 Lionel Tona

FRIENDS (\$25 – \$239)

Mark Aikman + Gustavo Cerquera
 Benjumea
 Francisco Alvarez
 Cole Alvis - in Honour of René Highway
 Anonymous (13)
 Caroline Balderston-Parry
 Yvonne Bambrick
 Michel Beauvais
 Neil Betteridge
 Dr. Kym Bird
 Peter A. Bird
 Andrew Bourgeois
 Gilles Yvon Bourque
 Adam Bourret
 Allen Braude
 Mary Breen
 Nathalie Brunet
 Julia Chanter
 Sheila Chevalier
 In honour of Paul Petro
 Catherine Cookman
 Jan Cornish + Laurie Reid

in memory of Jonathan Crombie
 Aaron Crespil
 Jennifer Dang-Tran
 Antonio de Jesus Osuna Zepeda
 Tom Diamond
 Anonymous
 Amber Ellert
 Bonni Ellis
 Matthew Emek
 Susan Feldman
 Lois Fine
 Barbara Fingerote
 in memory of Rob Flack
 Allegra Fulton
 in honour of Zachary Garand
 + Amelia Smart
 Emilie Garant
 Daniel Gilando
 Jameson Glas
 Danny Glenwright
 Zach and Amelia
 Amy Gottlieb + Maureen Fitzgerald
 Sara Glencross
 Sonja Greckol
 Cher Green
 Lance Green
 Garry Ho
 Jeff Hammond
 Matt Harding
 Beverly Harris
 Christine Harrison
 Bruce Hawkins
 Brendan Healy
 Kathryn Heller-McRoberts
 Brian J. Henderson
 Jonathan Heppner
 Barry Higgins
 Sean Hillier
 Zab Hobart
 Keith J Holland
 Andrea Houston
 Brian Hui
 Daria Ilkina
 Chris Ironside
 Adrian Ishak
 Kish Iqbal
 Derek Irwin
 Jaigris Hodson
 Rebecca Johnson
 Karie Johnston
 Ian Kamm
 Rob Kempson
 Tom Keogh + Paul McClure
 Daniel Kinrys
 Paul Klein
 Darlene Koczur
 Alison Kooistra
 Kim Koyama
 Debra S Lary
 Kristina Lemieux
 Nina Levitt
 Bradley Lister
 Shannon Litzenberger
 Michael Lyons

Gilles Marchildon
 Mathieu Marcil
 Lee-Anne McAlear
 Madryn McCabe
 Steven McGregor + Tony De Franco
 Mathew McKenzie
 Jeremy Minnagh
 Alan Moon
 Brandon + Nicole Moore
 Lawrence Moore
 Thompson Nguyen
 Lesley Nicholls
 Ruth Noble
 Edward Nowina
 Evalyn Parry
 Soheil Parsa
 Charles Pavia
 David Pearce
 Kenny Pearl
 Kenneth Percy
 Paul Petro
 Craig Pike
 Marietta Pinto
 Rui Pires
 Helen Posno
 Lisa Pottie
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 Heather G. Ramsay
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 Ingrid Randoja
 Susanna Reid
 Gary Rogers
 Nadia Ross
 Lea Rossiter
 Mitsuko Sada
 Silvia Samsa
 Anthony Sargent
 Adam Seelig
 Wendy Shaw
 Ann Simmons
 Karen Skidmore
 Steve Smart
 Marnie Sohn
 in memory of Gregory Williams
 Richard Stall + Lisa Berger
 Sarah Garton Stanley
 David Steinberg
 Anthony James Stokan
 Louis-Michel Taillefer
 Peter Taylor
 E. Jane Thompson
 Monica Voss
 David Walberg
 Katherine Walker
 Peter Bruce Walker
 Janette Watt
 Feliks Welfeld
 in memory of Tracy Wright
 Anthony Rankin Wilson
 Cathrin Winkelmann
 Steven K. Wong
 Bill Woodley
 Tina Yao
 Hersh Zeifman

The Company

Artistic Director **EVALYN PARRY**

Managing Director **SHAWN DAUDLIN**

Head of Production **CHARISSA WILCOX**

Director of Development + Communications **MARK AIKMAN**

Technical Director **ADRIEN WHAN**

Rhubarb Festival Director **CLAYTON LEE**

Residency Program Director **MEL HAGUE**

Emerging Creators Unit Director **CATHERINE HERNANDEZ***

Artists in Residence **BILAL BAIG + ANGEL GLADY, YOLANDA BONNELL, BRUCE GIBBONS FELL, JENNA HARRIS, LEAH LEWIS + ROBERT CHAFE, JUSTIN MILLER, QUEER AF COLLECTIVE, HEATH V SALAZAR, WE OTHER SONS COLLECTIVE**

Marketing + Outreach Manager **AIDAN MORISHITA-MIKI**

Development Coordinator **SABAH HAQUE**

Manager of Touring **CHRIS REYNOLDS**

Educational Programming Coordinator **DANIEL CARTER**

Box Office + FOH Manager **STEPHANIE MALEK**

Assistant Box Office + FOH Manager **JOHN CJ MURPHY**

Chamber Technician **AMBER PATTISON**

Cabaret Technician **STEPH RAPOSO**

Bar Manager **PATRICIA WILSON**

Finance Manager **CYNTHIA MURDY**

Box Office Representatives **DANIEL BOWEN, SAMANTHA CHAULK, MONICA GARRIDO, SHANE GRAMLICH, BROCK HESSEL, LUCIA LINARES-LEON, CERIDWEN KINGSTONE, NETA ROSE, SAM ROULSTON, CURTIS TE BRINKE**

Bar Personnel **CHARLIE BOYES, CLAIRE BURNS, CORSER DUPONT, KALEB ROBERTSON, JESS RUSSELL**

Board of Directors

Buddies in Bad Times Theatre

ELLIOT SMITH (chair)

BECK MCNEIL (treasurer)

KAI WA YAPP (secretary)

MARUSYA BOCIURKIW, JIM LAWRENCE, ANDREA RIDGLEY, RONAK SHAH, JAMIE SLATER, LOUIS TSILIVIS, CATHRIN WINKELMANN

The Alexander Street Theatre Project

RUSSELL MATHEW (chair)

BECK MCNEIL (treasurer)

JAMIE SLATER (secretary)

** a partnership with b current performing arts*

Buddies in bad times
I'm gonna say good-night
I'm gone
The show tanked
It's all my fault
Nobody else to blame
I should have listened to you
I should have played the poodle
That always works
But I did whatever the hell I wanted
And now I'm done
When you play the tough-haired bitch
You have to sweeten your tone
No one goes to concerts
to hear you howl at the moon
And that song about the humane society
was such a mistake
Buddies in bad times
I'm gonna say good-night
Sleep well
dream good dreams
I'm taking my hat
and the last two or three cigarettes
and I'm gone

Buddies in bad times
think of me every now and then
When you wake
think of me
somersaulting like a river otter
with candied salmon
somewhere
at night
by the lakeside
then passing round a jar
for change
for something to eat and drink
Buddies in bad times
I'm gonna say good-night
Sleep
Dream
I'm gone

—Jacques Prévert
“Le concert n’a pas été réussi”

translation by Soraya Peerbaye

40 YEARS
OF QUEER
1979-2019
Buddies
IN BAD TIMES THEATRE