

BUDDIES IN BAD TIMES ANNOUNCES ITS QUEER PRIDE PROGRAMMING

JUNE 15-30, 2020

BUDDIESINBADTIMES.COM/PRIDE

TORONTO: June 1, 2020. Buddies' annual Queer Pride Festival celebrates our community's unstoppable spirit, with digital and in-person (at a distance) offerings in performance, music, dance, and installation. And of course, a party, for good measure. With physical distancing measures still in place across the province, this year's festival expands its footprint beyond the theatre's home at 12 Alexander Street. Co-curated by Artistic Director **Evalyn Parry** and Metcalf Foundation Artistic Director Intern **Daniel Carter**, this year's festival asks how, in a time of physical distancing, can we still find ways to take up space, be visible, out, loud, proud, and political?

Parry and Carter comment: "In response to the pandemic, which has altered so many realities in such a short time, we have pivoted our annual Queer Pride Festival from a celebration where our communities gather at Buddies to one that brings the Buddies spirit out into our communities. The programming continues our proud tradition of provocative, genre-defying, and boundary-pushing performance, and the artists in this year's Festival have dreamed up new (as well as old-school) ways to forge connection across the distances between us, to celebrate our Queer Pride together this year like never before."

Offline, the theatre has spread its Pride programming well beyond its home in the Village. Following an open call for proposals, between June 15 and 28, over twenty artists create installations, pop-up performances, and mail-based projects, celebrating Pride at a hyper-local level. Participating artists include **Rhoma Spencer, Jenna Harris, Raymond Helkio, Trixie and Beaver, Jord Camp, Sage Lovell**, and more. Plus, letters are starting to be exchanged between queers across the country through the theatre's **Pride Pen Pals** program, which has so far seen over 400 sign-ups, accounting for queer folks from every province and territory.

Buddies' accelerated shift to the digital realm this year includes a number of noteworthy partnerships. On June 24, **CBC Arts presents *Queer Pride Inside***, a one-night blowout event showcasing some of Canada's queer performers, programmed by Buddies. Hosted live by award-winning comic **Elvira Kurt**, with performances by **Tawiah M'Carthy, Teiya Kasahara, Alexis O'Hara, Ivan Coyote, Les Femmes Fatales**, and more, the program will stream live on CBC Gem. Pride month programming is capped off on June 30 with an online presentation from Buddies' **Emerging Creators Unit**, who have been developing new works, led by **Catherine Hernandez**, in partnership with **b current performing arts**.

CBC ARTS PRESENTS QUEER PRIDE INSIDE: A BUDDIES IN BAD TIMES CABARET**CBC Arts Presents Queer Pride Inside: A Buddies in Bad Times Cabaret**

Wednesday, June 24, 9PM ET

Available on the free [CBC Gem](#) streaming service

CBC Arts teams up with the world's largest and longest-running queer theatre to bring you a one-night cabaret extravaganza. This virtual taste of what audiences have come to expect from Buddies' annual Queer Pride Festival will now be available to viewers across the country. Hosted live by award-winning comic **Elvira Kurt**, expect an evening of boundary-pushing, wild expression, with some of Canada's top queer performers in drag, burlesque, storytelling, and music. The lineup includes the **Gay Jesus**, **Tawiah M'Carthy**, **Ivan Coyote**, **Stewart Legere**, **Les Femmes Fatales**, and more.

buddiesinbadtimes.com/show/queer-pride-inside/**EMERGING CREATORS UNIT****Good Grief: Queer and Trans Reflections on the Edge of Survival****Emerging Creators Unit Presentations**in partnership with **b current performing arts**

Tuesday, June 30, 8PM ET

Digitally simulcast by Buddies

Since January, the 2020 **Emerging Creators Unit** cohort has been developing new works for the stage. Always a highly-anticipated event of the Buddies season, this year the innovative spirit of the Unit will be on full display, as they showcase the digital adaptations of their projects. Cap off your Queer Pride with a night of important, emerging queer voices: **Gabe Maharjan + Merlin Simard**, with support from Emerging Creators Unit director **Catherine Hernandez** and assistant directors **daniel jelani ellis** and **Rochelle Richardson**.

buddiesinbadtimes.com/show/ecu-2020**ANALOGUE PROJECTS CELEBRATING PRIDE IN PLACE****Analogue Projects Celebrating Pride in Place**

June 15 - 28

Across Toronto

During this time of isolation and physical distancing, we ask: how can we still find ways to take up public space, be visible, out, loud and proud, political? How can we bring the spirit of queer pride to our neighbourhoods, public, private and shared spaces right across our city? Over twenty artists respond, with seven hyper-local projects animating gardens, parking lots, and mailboxes across the city.

Mail-out Projects

Do-It-Yourself Pride Festival

creators **Lee Cameron + Wesley Reibeling**

This 13-day DIY Pride Festival zine offers reflections on Toronto's queer history and community, along with instructional event scores inviting you to activate and disrupt your own space and routines. A queer tribute to Yoko Ono's 1967 Do-It-Yourself Dance Festival.

(Also available for pick-up and in digital form)

Pride Grams

creator **Jenna Harris**

Inspired by valentine-o-grams and halloween-o-grams of our school days, have a cute, colourful, hand-stenciled postcard sent to a loved one to celebrate Pride season.

Fixed locations

Deaf Cabaret

curator **Sage Lovell**

featured performers **Gaitrie Persaud + Jay Go**

Location: Buddies in Bad Times Theatre, and various locations

Date: June 25, starting at 5PM

Ready to see magic come alive through sign language? Deaf Spectrum presents a series of pop-up performances by Deaf artists, animating sites across the downtown core, with a central activation outside Buddies in Bad Times Theatre.

Pocket Gay to Night

creators **Trixie & Beever** (with **Adrien Whan**)

Location: Boulton Ave & Jones Ave

Date: June 22-27, daily at 8PM

Pride nightlife vibes make their way to Trixie and Beever's east end home. In the front, a balcony covered in Pride accoutrements echoes the ones seen throughout the village, while the back turns into a party scene at dusk, as lights, music, shadows, and fog spill into the street.

Pride Rocks

creator + curator **Aisha Fairclough**

Location: McCowan District Park

Date: June 25-28

Responding to a lack of safe spaces for queer folks in Scarborough, Aisha Fairclough animates a park's walking trail with hand-painted rocks featuring affirmations of love, belonging, and resilience.

Queerantine

by the **Canadian-Caribbean Arts Network**

creator **Rhoma Spencer**, in collaboration with performers **Jillia Cato + Nickeshia Garrick**

soundscape design **Brandon Valdivia**

director **Rhoma Spencer**

Location: Shuter St & Sackville St
Date: June 27, 8PM + 9PM

Two lesbians meet for the first time after months of online dating, only to be confronted by COVID. *Queerantime* is a pas de deux on pavement: a physical theatre installation exploring queer love in the time of lockdown.

The Twilight Fairy Garden

director, animator **Raymond Helkio**

composer **Stewart Borden**

featuring **Dayon Mboya Monson**

offering **Keith Cole**

musical saw **Charlie C. Petch**

vocals **Hélène Ducharme**

writer **David Bateman**

Location: Pape Ave & Bain Ave (+ livestreamed)

Date: June 27, 9PM

Fairies will fly, fireflies will mate and disco ball unicorns will perform a musical saw aria culminating in a majestic rainbow. Watch a backyard garden transform, in real-time, into a magical symphony of colour, sound, and critters of the queerest kind.

A note regarding health and safety: While we want our communities to join in this celebration of Queer Pride, public safety has been a primary consideration in our programming. Many offerings have a digital or mail-out component. If you choose to engage with outdoor programs, we ask that you stick to projects in and around your neighbourhood, avoid crowding in any situation, and always respect physical distancing guidelines. We encourage you to wear a mask in public spaces to help stop the spread of COVID-19. Pay attention to the most up-to-date public health directives, use your judgement, and please be safe.

<https://buddiesinbadtimes.com/show/analogue-pride/>

PRIDE PEN PALS

Pride Pen Pals

Ongoing sign-up

This pen pal matching program is for queers — artists, audience members, club goers, retirees, arts workers, community leaders, old or young — who would welcome the chance to write a letter (or maybe a few), and get to know someone through an exchange through the mail. A chance to share some thoughts or memories about what Pride means to you, now, or before; a chance to exchange some queer life stories and experiences, to write about what things are like for you right now.

Open to queers across Canada:

<https://buddiesinbadtimes.com/pride-pen-pals/>

MEDIA INFO

INTERVIEWS – Listed artists are available for interviews in English. Select artists are available for interview in French, Spanish, and ASL. Contact Aidan Morishita-Miki at aidan@buddiesinbadtimes.com or 416-735-7991 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.