

## **Buddies in Bad Times Theatre receives a transformative gift from the Saight Family Foundation**

TORONTO, ON (September 28, 2022) - Buddies in Bad Times Theatre has received a \$250,000 donation from the Saight Family Foundation—one of 22 recipient organizations who will share part of a \$15 million gift aimed at rejuvenating the theatre sector as it emerges from the pandemic. This transformational gift was announced this morning at the Young Centre for the Performing Arts. **Gary Saight**, president and CEO of the Saight Family Foundation, commented, “We’re very happy to support these organizations so they can focus on the work of creating & bringing back audiences.”

The pandemic has disproportionately affected organizations and artists in the theatre sector and queer communities. Artists who shape our city’s queer culture have lost innumerable work opportunities alongside the loss of several queer community hubs. On the donation, Interim Director of Operations and Programming **Daniel Carter** says: “This pivotal donation is so meaningful as we reopen our theatre, rebuild audiences, and reimagine a new chapter for Buddies. The pandemic has had an outsized impact on Buddies. The closure of our theatre and of our cabaret space—an essential revenue stream for Buddies — for the better part of two years has had an immense financial impact. Alongside this, the shuttering of an accessible community space for gathering and celebration has had a huge impact on community. This generous donation allows us to take risks in our art-making and continue to provide a vital space for our queer communities to come together.”

This type of direct support is so critical now, as theatre companies across the city and country emerge from the heaviest parts of the pandemic, welcoming back audiences all while prioritizing the safety and comfort of both artists and audiences.

Buddies’ 44th season starts next week with the world premiere presentation of **Donna-Michelle St. Bernard’s** *The First Stone*, a large-scale New Harlem Productions and Great Canadian Theatre Company production, featuring an ensemble cast of fifteen. The 2022/23 season features more world premieres, presentations by national and international artists, and a continued tour of **Kiinalik: These Sharp Tools**, alongside the theatre’s creative development and community programming, and the return of **ARTATTACK!**, Buddies’ annual fundraiser art auction, hosted by **Ryan G. Hinds**.

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Established in 1979, **Buddies in Bad Times Theatre** is Toronto’s leading destination for artistically rigorous, alternative theatre and a world leader in developing queer voices and stories for the stage. Over the course of its history, it has evolved into the largest facility-based queer theatre company in the world and has made an unparalleled contribution to the recognition and acceptance of queer lives in Canada.

[buddiesinbadtimes.com](http://buddiesinbadtimes.com)