

ARTIST AND CURATOR CLAYTON LEE TAPPED TO LEAD BUDDIES IN BAD TIMES THEATRE'S RHUBARB FESTIVAL

Buddies in Bad Times Theatre has announced Toronto-based performance artist, curator, and producer Clayton Lee as the company's next Rhubarb Festival Director.

Clayton is no stranger to Rhubarb, having presented his solo performance *Chew, Chew, Swallow, Spit* at the 2016 Festival. His performance work has also been featured locally at SummerWorks and Katzman Contemporary, as well as The Performance Arcade (Wellington, New Zealand) and Chapter's EXPERIMENTICA (Cardiff, Wales). He is also the Managing Producer of Selfconscious Productions, which presents the annual CanadaHub at the Edinburgh Festival Fringe, and previously worked as the Interim General Manager and the Assistant Artistic Producer at the SummerWorks Performance Festival.

On his appointment, Clayton remarks *"I couldn't be more excited to take on the role of Rhubarb Festival Director. For 40 years, Rhubarb has been an integral part of our local and national performance community and I look forward to continuing its legacy of risk-taking and experimentation while collectively imagining and re-imagining our ability to adapt, resist, and mutate our very notions of performance."*

First mounted in 1979, Rhubarb is the longest-running new works festival in Canada and has been helmed by notable theatre makers such as Franco Boni, Naomi Campbell, Kelly Thornton, Sky Gilbert, Laura Nanni, Cynthia Grant, Erika Hennebury, David Oiyé, Moynan King, and most recently Mel Hague who served as Festival Director from 2015-2019. It was announced earlier in the year that Mel would be stepping down from her role as Festival Director to dedicate more time to Buddies' expanding new work development program. Her tenure at Rhubarb saw over 100 new works from artists across Canada, and collaborations with leading arts institutions such as the National Arts Centre, Berlin's Maxim Gorki Theater, the Canadian Lesbian and Gay Archives, and the Sound Off Festival.

The 41st Rhubarb Festival will take place February 12-23, 2020. The call for submissions will be posted to the Buddies in Bad Times Theatre website in July.

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