

FemFest 2017: Coming of Age Artist and Production Team Bios

50/50 (Performers, Opening Cabaret)

Jane Testar and RobYn Slade are one-third of the musical improv company, *Outside Joke*, and one-half of a book club whose favourite genre is 'coming of age' stories. *50/50* is a theatrical experiment borrowed from *Montreal Improv*. Half-scripted, half-improvised, *50/50* explores preparedness vs spontaneity.

Joseph Abetria (Designer, Two Indians)

Joseph is excited to be back with *FemFest* this year! A graduate of the University of Winnipeg's Theatre Honours program, his recent design highlights include: *Last Train to Nibroc* (RMTTC); *The Seduction Theory* (Sarasvati Productions); *Richard III* (SIR); *Iceland* (TPM); *Vinegar Tom*, *The Cassilis Engagement*, *The Laramie Project*, *The Power of Yes*, and *Seven Doors* (UofW). He recently came back from Stratford Festival where he worked as the costume design assistant under Christina Poddubiuk for the 2017 production of *Romeo and Juliet*. At times, Joseph also works as a scenic artist. Hope you enjoy the show!

Kaitlin Aiello (Performer, Opening Cabaret)

Kaitlin Aiello is an arts administrator, actor and producer specializing in physical-devised theatre. Kaitlin graduated from the Theatre Performance and Arts Administration and Cultural Management programs at Humber College. She also completed three years at the University of Winnipeg, majoring in Theatre, where she co-founded Antiscian Productions with Rachel Smith. Their company has toured throughout western Canada, producing devised theatre in unconventional spaces at the Winnipeg and Edmonton Fringe Festival (2015). She has volunteered on J. R.'s international award winning project called *Inside Out* at Toronto City Hall's Nathan Phillips Square for Nuit Blanche Toronto (2015).

Emmy Alcorn (Artistic Director, Mulgrave Road Theatre)

Artistic Director for MRT for 20 years, Emmy develops and produces new Canadian plays. She has produced 4 world premieres by Daniel MacIvor, originating the roles of Boots in *Bingo!* and Louise in *Marion Bridge*. She has worked as an actor, director and musician with companies such as Neptune Theatre, Ship's Company, and Festival Antigonish. Directing credits include the Atlantic Canadian premiere of Judith Thompson's *Watching Glory Die* and the original production of *The West Woods* (Stages Festival, Nova Scotia tour, National Arts Centre). Emmy executive produced her CD of original songs and received the Nova Scotia Established Artist Award.

Jessy Ardern (Playwright, Kit and Joe)

Jessy Ardern is an actor, a playwright, and an artistic co-producer with indie theatre company Impossible Mongoose. Her writing has been seen onstage in Winnipeg, Saskatoon, Toronto, and Edmonton. Most recently her Greek farce *The Fall of the House of Atreus: A Cowboy Love Song* earned three Elizabeth Sterling Haynes Awards in Edmonton (Outstanding Fringe Production; Outstanding Fringe New Work; Outstanding Fringe Director). This past spring Jessy graduated from the U of A's BFA acting program. Favorite acting credits since then include Procne in *If We Were Birds* and Margarethe in *Copenhagen*.

Sara Arenson (Playwright, Bake-Off)

Sara Arenson is a Winnipeg writer whose work includes plays, screenplays, opinion essays, and radio journalism. Previously, her works *The Story of Deborah* and *Teen Trucker* were produced by Sarasvati in *FemFest* and the IWW Cabaret of Monologues. Sara often explores difference, disability, and Jewish identity.

Sonya Ballantyne (Director, Two Indians)

Sonya Ballantyne is a filmmaker/writer originally from Misipawistik Cree Nation. Her work focuses on Aboriginal girls and women in non-traditional film genres such as fantasy, horror, and superhero films. Her film *Crash Site* has played internationally and focuses on sisters reconciling with the help of a superhero. Her next film *Nosisim* follows Sonya learning about her grandmother's past through a drawing done by famed artist Daphne Odjig. She will begin filming *eagleGirl* and will be releasing a graphic novel based on the superhero created for *Crash Site*. *Two Indians* is her stage directing debut under the mentorship of Hope McIntyre.

Sharon Bajer (Playwright, One Night Stand)

Sharon is an actor, playwright and director. She is a member of the playwright's unit at PTE. Her plays include *Molly's Veil*, *Burnin' Love*, *Hersteria*, *To the Country*, *The Mother Load*, *Jesus Does Laundry Too* and *The Gingerbread Girl* (in progress). Most recently Sharon appeared in Donal O'Kelly's play *Catalpa* at the Winnipeg Fringe Festival. Coming up, Sharon will direct *The Best Brothers* at Western Canada Theatre Company and *Theatre Northwest* and *Fly Me to the Moon* at Prairie Theatre Exchange. Sharonbajer.com

Ian Bastin (Performer, Bake-Off)

Ian's previous work with Sarasvati include, *Breaking Through Workshop*, *The Elevator Project*, *So You Think You Can Act*, as well as last year's *Bake Off*. He has worked with (selected) Black Hole Theatre, Red Hen Productions, Snakeskin Jacket, Bravura Theatre, YES Theatre, Tara Players as well as the Winnipeg Fringe Festival. He is a product of the University of Manitoba's Black Hole theatre program.

Columpa C. Bobb (Playwright, One Night Stand)

Columpa was born in Canada and is the great grand daughter of Chief Dan George who was chief of the Tsleil-Waututh Nation. Her many talents include acting, photography and writing poetry and plays. Many of her plays have been produced all across Canada. She has been nominated for the Dora Mavor Moore Award and the James Buller Award. In 1997 she won a Jessie Richardson Theatre Award for Outstanding Performance by an Actress in a Supporting Role for her work in Firehall Theatre's production of Drew Hayden Taylor's *Only Drunks and Children Tell the Truth*.

FemFest 2017: Coming of Age Artist and Production Team Bios

BUNNY (EMCEEs, Opening Cabaret)

Arguably Winnipeg's best all-female-90's-R&B-comedy-ukulele-duo, B-Rabbit and HunnyBunny's charming and unapologetic attitude will take you by surprise. Singing about everything from Instagram to networking to unsatisfying sex, this disarming pair don't shy away from taboo subjects and real-life problems. BUNNY is thrilled to be a part of this year's *FemFest* Cabaret and hopes you enjoy this female-powered festival!

Facebook: bunnyukulele (<https://www.facebook.com/BUNNYUKULELE/>)

Instagram: bunnyukulele

Youtube: Bunny Ukulele

Tatiana Carnevale (Director, One Night Stand)

Tatiana Carnevale is a local director, producer, and arts administrator. Her favourite credits include *The Trump Card*, *Tigers Be Still* (director, District Theatre Collective), *You Were There*, [title of show], (director and producer, Pocket Frock Productions), *The Drowning Girls*, *Speech and Debate* (producer, Pocket Frock Productions), *Shorts...* (director, Sarasvati), and *Godspell* (director, Winnipeg Studio Theatre). She has assisted and apprenticed with RMT, WJT, and Rainbow Stage, and studied at the University of Winnipeg (BA Theatre) and University of Guelph (MA Theatre Studies).

Connie Chappel (Visual Artist, Opening Cabaret)

Connie Chappel is a Winnipeg artist who holds a BFA-1st class honours from the University of Manitoba. Life experiences inform her multimedia art practice; assemblage sculpture and photography explore the correlation between the natural world, human life, and the cycle of living entities. Her work has exhibited at Propeller Centre for the Visual Arts (Toronto), World of Threads Festival (Oakville), Orillia Museum of Art and History (Orillia, ON), and Ukrainian Cultural and Education Centre (Winnipeg). In 2016 she was commissioned to exhibit *The Mulvey*, a photo installation, for *Transitions: The New Biennial for Art and Architecture*, Botkyrka konsthall, Tumba, Sweden.

Ginny Collins (Playwright, One Night Stand)

Ginny Collins, Winnipeg-based playwright has worked with English and French theatre communities. Ginny lived and worked in Africa and Latin America and is now the Communications and Marketing Director at Manitoba Film & Music. Ginny's play *The Flats* (*Les Flats*) was produced by Prairie Theatre Exchange and Theatre Cercle Moliere in 2017. In 2014, *Good Intentions* was produced at Winnipeg Jewish Theatre. Ginny's other works include *The Good Daughter*, *MBTV: Histoire en Direct*, *Prairie Spirits*, and *Terroristas*. Ginny is under commission by Prairie Theatre Exchange for *Revenge and Co*. She is a member of the Prairie Theatre Exchange Playwrights Unit.

Trish Cooper (Playwright, One Night Stand)

Theatre graduate from the University of Winnipeg, Trish works as an actor and writer in Winnipeg. She began writing sketch comedy with the Royal Liechtenstein Theatre Company and wrote for Fringe Festivals across Canada including *The Comment Card* and *Homely Woman #2* (with Vanessa Macrae). Trish was a writer/performer for Theatre Projects Manitoba's inaugural *In the Chamber* series and regularly contributed for CBC's *Definitely Not the Opera*. *Social Studies*, developed and produced at Prairie Theatre Exchange, went on to be produced by Centaur Theatre in Montreal, and Firehall Theatre in Vancouver. *Social Studies* won Best Play at the Manitoba Book Awards.

Carrie Costello (Playwright, Grounded Heroes)

Carrie Costello has lived throughout Canada and now calls Winnipeg home. As a puppeteer for young audiences, she has toured with Carousel Players and Roseneath Theatre nationally and internationally. Carrie has created and toured seven scripts for preschool aged children. She wrote *There's Mouse in My House* (based on a book by Sheree Fitch), which was produced in 2009 by Carousel Players and later remounted and toured to Young People's Theatre and Theatre Direct. *Water Under the Bridge*, which she co-wrote with Michaela Washburn, was produced in 2012 by Carousel Players and remounted in 2013 for Saskatchewan Native Theatre Company.

Ivan Coyote (Performer, Tomboy Survival Guide)

Ivan Coyote is the author of eleven books, the creator of four short films, six full-length live shows, and three albums that combine storytelling with music. Over the last two decades Ivan has become an audience favourite at storytelling, writing, film, poetry, and folk music festivals. Ivan's 11th book, *Tomboy Survival Guide*, was released in the fall of 2016 with Arsenal Pulp Press. *Tomboy Survival Guide* was named an American Library Association Stonewall Honour Book in 2016, and this fall Ivan will be given an Honorary Doctorate of Laws at Simon Fraser University for their writing and activism.

Anita Daher (Performer, One Night Stand)

As both actor and children's book author, Anita Daher has performed for audiences at both ends of the hourglass. She's written more than a dozen books for children and teens, and is currently working on a film script, *Tia*, adapted from one of her novels. Anita performs monthly with her improv comedy troupe, *The Crosseyed Rascals*, and will next appear on a theatrical stage in Tara Players' November production of *Dirty Dusting* by Ed Waugh and Trevor Wood.

Melanie Dean (Performer, One Night Stand)

Born in The Pas Manitoba and member of Mathias Colomb Cree Nation Melanie is the Executive Director of Empowering Indigenous Youth in Governance and Leadership. She's worked at Income Security Programs and Winnipeg Housing and Homelessness Initiative, transcriber and editor at APTN, Acting Coach at Manitoba Theatre for Young People, Youth Care worker and Cultural Coordinator at Seven Oaks School Division's after school program, and an actor that performs in various onstage plays such as, Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night*, *The Crisis in Oka Manitoba* with Red Roots Theatre Company, *August Osage County* with MTC, and *Jail Baby* with Sarasvati Productions.

FemFest 2017: Coming of Age

Artist and Production Team Bios

Brigette DePape (Playwright, Bake-Off)

Brigette is a playwright, actress, and activist from Winnipeg, Manitoba. She wrote the Fringe hit *She Rules with Iron Stix* which received 4 and 5 star reviews at the Winnipeg, Saskatoon and Ottawa Fringe Festivals. Her play *Rogue Page* was selected for the Words Without Borders Writing Festival on Salt Spring Island. Her first play, *In Between*, which she wrote at 15 years old, was nominated for the Harry S. Rintoul Best New Manitoban Play Award. She has studied playwriting and acting at Prairie Theatre Exchange and has taken Creative Writing seminars at the University of Ottawa.

Melanee Deschambeault (Performer, Two Indians)

Melanee Deschambeault is French and Anishinaabe from Dauphin, Manitoba. She is an actress and a student of University of Manitoba. Selected theatre credits include: *Two Indians*, *Q&A* and *SHORTS* all with Sarasvati Productions. *Translations* and *Doubtful House* with the Black Hole Theatre Company. Melanee has just completed a performance in *Riot Revolt Resist Repeat*, a Vault Projects Production for the Winnipeg Fringe Festival. Melanee thanks all the creative teams and directors involved in the creation of each project she has been a part of. Melanee looks forward to future workshops in New York and Toronto.

Eston Ferraton (Costumes, Two Indians)

Eston is going into her fourth year of university at the University of Winnipeg. She is studying theatrical design but loves theatre production and stage management. She has been involved with a small theatre and film company for four years and enjoys exploring different mediums of storytelling. Eston enjoys reading and still finds joy in the small things; like the sound of rain and reading by candle light. She is an avid traveler and a lover of Disney, Harry Potter and baking.

Daphne Finlayson (Coordinator, The Human Library)

Daphne is a recent graduate of the University of Manitoba's theatre program. During her time with the university's Black Hole Theatre Company, she has taken part on a number of productions as director, sound designer, performer, and stage manager. She is excited to help out with the Human Library project and to hear stories from this group of diverse Canadians.

Alison Gorman (Performer, Tomboy Survival Guide)

Alison Gorman is a trumpet player out of Vancouver. Alison performs in a range of ensembles, including the burlesque group Pandora and the Locksmiths, trad jazz swing band Sweetpea, African/reggae band Pendomoja, as well as directing Queer As Funk, Vancouver's own LGBTQ Motown, soul and funk band. She has performed with a number of artists including Dan Mangan, 54-40, Ivan Coyote, The Salteens, Pacific Sound Collective, Kate Reid and others.

Tamera Grace (Production Assistant, Sarasvati Productions)

Tamera Grace is working on a Bachelor of Arts in Theatre and Business Admin at the U of W. Originally focusing on acting under the direction of Heidi Malazdrewich and Eric Blais, she is now taking an interest in production and backstage work. On stage she's played Corin and Jaques de Bois in *As You Like It* with Midnight Montague Productions, and has stage managed *Rough for Theatre II* by Samuel Beckett at the U of W. Tamera is honoured to work with a community as amazing as Sarasvati and wants to continue working in the not-for-profit sector. *Happy FemFest!*

Green (Performers, Opening Cabaret)

Emily Solstice, Ady Kay, and Victoria Emilie Hill found their ways to each other through the University of Winnipeg Theatre Department. Adrianna and Victoria are recent graduates of the Honours Acting Program at the U of W, and have continued to work together on projects such as *The Patriarchy*, their two-woman Acapella band. Emily Solstice is a dancer in the School of Contemporary Dancers Senior Professional Program and has worked as a choreographer and performer in Winnipeg and across Canada. They aspire to create meaningful movement based work and collaborate with other artists working in various mediums.

Christina Heather (Performer, Bake Off)

Christina Heather is so excited to be working with Sarasvati Productions for the first time at *FemFest 2017*. Most recently, you might have seen Christina at the Canada Summer Games playing in a *Dollhouse* with One Trunk Theatre. Other recent credits include; *The Doula* (Randy Pirate Productions-WPG Fringe), *The Hollow* (Vault Projects- Christie Fest) and *Sold Out* (Dark Honey Collective- WPG Fringe). Christina is a graduate of the Acting Honours Program at the University of Winnipeg and is most happy when she is collaborating with other artists on original creations.

Larissa Hikel (Playwright, Bake Off)

Larissa Hikel is a writer, actor and photographer with a lot of weird ideas. She alternates between sleepless nights of productivity and doing basically nothing for weeks at a time. Her first writing gig was providing the fortunes for the inside of cookies given away at a birthday party. She still wonders about those kids and whether they decided to take the free advice. In between recovering from rejection letters, she enjoys eavesdropping, libraries, and making clothes. Larissa lives in Winnipeg most of the time.

Renee Hill (Performer, One Night Stand)

Renee graduated from the University of Winnipeg theatre program and is a gifted musician and singer. She performs annually in the *Jp Hoe Hoe Holiday Show* and enjoys doing voice over work, most recently for CuriosityStream's docudrama *Alexander the Great*. She is passionate about her community and working to help others, completing her Masters in Social Work while raising her three children in her beloved neighborhood of Wolseley! Hugs to Jonny and her family for everything!

FemFest 2017: Coming of Age

Artist and Production Team Bios

Victoria Emilie Hill (Performer, Kit and Joe)

Victoria Emilie Hill has been an artist ever since she was 10 years. She loves to make theatre fun, remembering her childlike sense of enthusiasm while also aiming to connect to humans through storytelling and exchanging personal experiences. Victoria is an avid student of life, challenging herself to experience everything from white water rafting, to skydiving, to knitting. Leaving no stone unturned and exercising empathy are at the heart of her art and her soul, and she hopes to continue on this path and meet more incredible people along the way.

Braiden Houle (Performer, Kit and Joe)

Born and raised in Winnipeg, Braiden wanted to become an actor at a young age. He started attending acting classes at Manitoba Theatre for Young People's Aboriginal Arts Training and Mentorship Program. At age 12, Braiden landed his first acting gig in the feature film *Juliana and the Medicine Fish*, starring Rob Schneider. He has continued to grow and expand his abilities, shifting his focus to theatre. Through his work he's experienced three high school tours, roles in three Winnipeg Fringe Festivals, and teaching theatre and film to Indigenous youth in Winnipeg. He is now a graduate of Studio 58.

Krista Jackson (Director, Kit and Joe)

Krista is Royal Manitoba Theatre Centre's associate artistic director and the artistic director of zone41 theatre. Her production of *Dancing at Lughnasa* is currently running at The Shaw Festival. Associate Director: *All My Sons* (Stratford Festival). Director: *Morning After Grace* (Upcoming) *Bittergirl: The Musical*, *Private Lives*, *The Seagull* (Royal MTC); *The Lion in Winter*, *Fly Me to the Moon*, *Much Ado About Nothing* (The Grand Theatre); *Dying to Be Thin* (MTYP); *The Miser of Middlegate* (zone41/TPM); *Village Wooing* (zone41). Krista holds the 2015 Stratford Festival Jean Gascon Award and the 2013 Gina Wilkinson Prize. www.kristajackson.com

Lorraine Veronica James (Performer, Bake Off)

Lorraine has been in the entertainment industry for 20+ years. Starting at Edmonton's Walterdale Playhouse, continuing in Winnipeg with Townhouse 9, Popular Theatre Alliance of Manitoba, and Winnipeg Fringe Festival. Lorraine took part in the Vancouver TheatreSports League. She got her comedic break participating in Montreal's *Just For Laughs* comedy festival for the improv tournament, coming in 2nd place representing Vancouver. After earning a living as a background extra, body double and stand in, Winnipeg called her back. Lorraine participated in several Sarasvati productions (*Cabaret of Monologues*, *No Offense...GenderPlay*, *Stories from Brown Girl Jovay*, *Say Ginger Ale*, *Empty*, and *DISS*).

Falen Johnson (Playwright, Two Indians)

Falen is Mohawk and Tuscarora from Six Nations Grand River Territory. She is bear clan. Falen is a writer, producer, director, and actor. Her plays *Salt Baby*, *Two Indians*, and *Ipperwash* have played in theatres across the country. Her writing will be appearing in upcoming publications such as *Granta Magazine*, *Brick Literary Journal*. She has also been featured in *The Canadian Theatre Review* as well as the *Moth Storytelling* podcast. Falen has earned TV writing credits for *Urban Native Girl* (APTN) and was a researcher on *Colonization Road* (Frog Girl Films). She is developing a new podcast series *The Secret Life of Canada* with co-creator Leah-Simone Bowen which will be out this late summer.

Sandy Klowak (Stage Manager, Opening Cabaret)

Sandy is happy to be returning to the role of stage manager for the *FemFest* cabaret. Recent stage managing credits include *Riot Resist Revolt Repeat* at Winnipeg Fringe 2017 (Vault Projects), *Love from a Stranger* at Christie Fest 2017 (Tara Players) and *Taking it to the Grave* in October 2016 (Glamdrew & Lady Janitor).

Primrose Madayag Knazan (Playwright, One Night Stand)

Jewish Filipino-Canadian playwright Primrose Madayag Knazan has been featured at the Winnipeg Fringe Theatre Festival, the International Writers Festival, CBC Radio, the Carol Shields Festival of New Works, and Sarasvati's *FemFest*. She has been published in three anthologies and represented Manitoba at the first Asian-Canadian Theatre Conference in Toronto. She has been a featured speaker at several diversity events within the Filipino community and the federal government. Primrose also dabbles as a food writer and photographer promoting Winnipeg restaurants and homecooking with an active social media presence as PrimroseMK on Instagram, Twitter, and Snapchat.

Marsha Knight (Consultant, Two Indians)

Marsha's *Coming of Age* happens "every time I write my bio and realize how long I've been in this business." From the early days of Ian Ross' *fareWel* and Tomson Highway's *Rez Sisters* to recent work of Kevan Bowkett's *Time's Fancy* and Hope McIntyre and Cairn Moore's *Breaking Through*, Marsha has been both on stage and many-a-hand off stage. Never having received formal theatre training, her next *Coming of Age* begins now as she starts U of W to enhance her theatre/film experience. Many congrats to Hope for her vision, guidance, and steadfastness in having *FemFest* grow to 15 years.

Frances Koncan (Playwright, Grounded Heroes)

Frances Koncan is an Anishinaabe writer and director from Couchiching First Nation. In 5th grade, they wrote a poem and were falsely accused of plagiarism by a teacher and have been revenge writing ever since. Their most recent play, *Riot Resist Revolt Repeat*, debuted at the Winnipeg Fringe Festival, and will be performed at Native Earth's Weesageechak Festival in Toronto, Ontario. Upcoming productions include *Riot Resist Revolt Repeat* (Redux) at Nuit Blanche, their next play, entitled *Women of the Fur Trade (and the Men who Ain't Shit)* will debut in 2018. It's a musical.

Melissa Langdon (Performer, One Night Stand)

Melissa is a 4th year honours acting student from The University of Winnipeg. Past theatre productions include *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead*, *The Balcony*, *Les Misérables*, *Grease*, and *Footloose*. Film productions include *GRIEF*, *Cancer*, *Harmonize*.

FemFest 2017: Coming of Age

Artist and Production Team Bios

Zoë Leclerc-Kennedy (Stage Manager, *Bake Off*)

Zoë is thrilled to be back for a second year with Fem Fest! She is a fresh graduate from the University of Winnipeg with an honours degree in Theatre Production and Stage Management. Recent credits include: Apprentice Stage Manager: *Sarah Ballenden* and *Bittergirl the Musical* (RMTC), *Falstaff* (MB Opera), Stage Manager: Canada Day 2017 at the Forks, *Inertia* (Happy/Accidents), *Bake Off* 2016 (Sarasvati) Props: *The Seduction Theory* (Sarasvati), Apprentice Builder: *Black Coffee* and *Hand to God* (RMTC), Props Runner: *My Name is Asher Lev* (RMTC)

Samantha Lussier (Administrator Intern, Sarasvati Productions)

Samantha is a Boudoir & Event Photographer. Graduating the Business Administration program at RRC in 2010 she worked in offices for 6 years. In 2015 she heard of young Alexis, who desperately needed a liver donor. Being deemed not a match but determined to help she began a campaign to raise awareness & funds needed for Alexis's transplant in Toronto. After a successful campaign Alexis received her transplant & in 2016, Samantha was awarded the title: Manitoba Hero. Inspired, Samantha pursued her passion for photography & graduated the Professional Photography Program at RRC in 2017. Visit samantharaephotography.ca for Samantha's story.

Jo MacDonald (Playwright, *Bake Off*)

Jo is Anishinaabe, a mom, Eddie Izzard/Henry Rollins & theatre fan, and an educator. She gave up super villainy to teach awesome grades 3-5 kids.

Stephanie MacDonald (Performer, Mulgrave Road Theatre)

Stephanie MacDonald is grateful to be a part of *FemFest*. She is an award winning actor who makes her home in Halifax Nova Scotia, and has performed nationally as well as internationally. Select Theatre credits: *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Liberation Days* (*Two Planks and a Passion*); *The Boat* (*Theatre New Brunswick*); *The Weekend Healer*, *Communion* (*KAZAN CO-OP/NAC*); *Marion Bridge* (*Valley Summer Theatre*); *Small Things* (*Neptune Theatre*).

Hope McIntyre (Artistic Director, Sarasvati Productions)

Hope has a BFA and MFA in theatre. She is founding Artistic Director of Sarasvati Productions. She is an award winning playwright and director who specializes in community collaboration. Hope was given the YWCA Women of Distinction Award and the Bra D'Or Award for her support of female artists. She has taught at Mount Allison, Brandon University and the University of Manitoba. She currently teaches at the University of Winnipeg and at Prairie Theatre Exchange. She is a former President of the Playwrights Guild of Canada and on the Board of the North End Women's Centre.

Cairn Moore (Director, *Bake Off*)

Cairn is a director and playwright. She teaches performance at the University of Winnipeg and is the Associate Artistic Director of *FemFest*. Cairn's award winning play *SHIKSA* premiered with Winnipeg Jewish Theatre in 2016 and was short-listed for the Chris Johnson Award. *Breaking Through*, Cairn's second play co-written with Hope McIntyre premiered in May of this year with Sarasvati productions. Their first play *Jail Baby*, was both produced (*Sarasvati*) and published (*Scirocco*) in May 2013. With the generous support of the Manitoba Arts Council, Cairn is currently in the process of writing a second draft of her new play *STIGMA*.

Charlene Moore (Filmmaker, Opening Cabaret)

Charlene Moore is a Winnipeg filmmaker and member of York Factory First Nation. With a Bachelor of Arts in Indigenous Studies and Film, she is currently working to complete her Masters in Indigenous Governance at the University of Winnipeg. Charlene works in narrative and documentary formats in the film industry as a writer, director, producer, and sound recordist. She believes film can be a boundless method for individuals and communities to learn and heal. Her latest documentary *Moccasin Stories* can be found on MTS Stories From Home.

Larysa Musick (Marketing and Community Outreach Assistant, Sarasvati Productions)

Larysa Musick, born in Winnipeg MB, is a Creative Communications student at Red River College and the director of Winnipeg Poetry Slam. She has performed at The Winnipeg International Writers Festival, Gimli Film Festival and CV2 at Winnipeg Fringe Festival. In her spare time, she freelances as an illustrator and calligraphist.

Sarah O'Brien (Stage Manager, Mulgrave Road Theatre)

Sarah hung out for a spell at Queen's University, studying Drama and Art History, and at Studio 58 wreaking havoc in Production, before apprenticing at GCTC and Festival Antigonish Summer Theatre. She stage manages theatre, musical theatre, dance and new projects in Toronto and across the country. Sarah spent her last seventeen summers in Nova Scotia with Festival Antigonish. Recent credits include *The Hound Of The Baskervilles* (Festival Antigonish), *Brave New World* (Litmus Theatre), *Our Town* (Theatre Rusticle), *As You Like It* (George Brown Theatre School), and *Assemblée Internationale 2017* for Canada's National Ballet School.

Logan Oxenham (Performer, Opening Cabaret)

Logan Oxenham (formerly Lindsay Jane) has embarked on his journey to honour his authentic self. Lindsay Jane had notable achievements such as 2 Canadian Folk Music Awards nominations (Songwriter of the Year/Performer of the Year), and "Gasoline Stain," still on regular rotation on Serius/XM the Coffee House. Logan Oxenham is starting all over. Logan is exploring his new and changing voice, beginning his life as a trans man with open arms.

Tori Popp (Production Coordinator, Sarasvati Productions)

Tori is a recent graduate of the University of Winnipeg Theatre department with a BA Hons. and is excited for what's to come now that she's finished school. After just finishing her 7th consecutive year working with the Winnipeg Fringe Theatre Festival, Tori is excited to be back with

FemFest 2017: Coming of Age

Artist and Production Team Bios

Sarasvāti for *FemFest* as it's one of her favourite festivals of the year. Thanks goes to the whole Sarasvāti team, and Tori's team at home, without them she couldn't do any of it!

Prairie Caravan (Performers, Opening Cabaret)

Prairie Caravan Tribal Bellydance is a troupe of dancers that are passionate about this style of dance. There is very little actual choreography in tribal, as the dancers learn to read each other's movements and cues, so they move together, like a flock of birds. "Coming of Age" is something many of the dancers can understand as this group of women represents FIVE decades of different age ranges! They've proven to themselves that any size, shape or age can dance, and this is very empowering. Their troupe motto? Forget what you *THINK* you know about bellydance . . .

Josh Ranville (Performer, Bake Off)

Josh is an actor/musician from Winnipeg. Josh has been part of a few Sarasvāti productions in the past: *Eden* workshop, and *Breaking Through*. His most recent public theatre work was a one-man touring play with the Manitoba Theatre for Young People called *Routes*, and *Breaking Through* with Sarasvāti Productions. Josh trained for 3 years at Studio 58 in Vancouver B.C. This summer, Josh played Bass with *Burnt Project 1* on the Scotia-Bank Stage for *Aboriginal Day Live* which was broadcasted live to 8 cities across Canada.

Dianna Rasing (Performer, Opening Cabaret)

Dianna Rasing began acting in high school, she has produced and performed in various plays such as *Love's Labour's Lost* and *Agnes of God* (Agnes). In recent years, Dianna has performed and directed plays with the Tara Players Theatre Company; she also played the Qallapilliut in *Prairie Theatre Exchange's A Promise is A Promise*. Dianna has performed in many Fringe Festival shows; in 2016 she wrote and starred in *Seducing Father Brian*. This is Dianna's second time doing stand-up comedy in front of an audience, the first time was in June 2017 for Sick & Twisted Theatre's Cabaret night.

Cherissa Richards (Playwright, Grounded Heroes)

Cherissa Richards is currently acting in The Shaw Festival 2017 Season as Lucy in *Dracula* and performing in *1837 The Farmer's Revolt*. She was seen in RMTC's *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night*, and Shakespeare in the Ruins' *Richard III*. Her TYA acting credits include: Carousel Theatre and BTW's productions of *The Power of Harriet T*, and *Tough Case* (MTYP). Cherissa directed her first production of *The Power of Harriet T* for MTYP and assistant directed MTYP's *Jungle Book*. Cherissa graduated from University of Winnipeg, studied at NTS and is an MFA graduate of York University.

Katie Robinson-Hoppa (Stage Manager, Two Indians)

Katie Hoppa (Stage Manager) is incredibly excited to be working with Sarasvāti for the first time this year. Katie is currently in her final year of studies at the University of Winnipeg's department of Theatre and Film focusing on theatrical production and stage management. She is passionate about working on projects that use stories to make people think and promote social change. Last year she had the privilege and pleasure of stage managing several shows including *The Drowning Girls* (Pocket Frock Productions), *Peter Fechter: 59 Minutes* (Theatre by the River) and *Constellations* (Theatre by the River).

Danielle Savage (Performer, Bake Off)

Danielle is a local actress who is very pleased to be performing again in *FemFest*. She started her association with Sarasvāti in 2006, her performances include: *Absolute Perfection*; *Sex, the Ins and Outs*; *Cabaret of Monologues* and two previous *Bake Offs*. Plus, she was also part of the winning team for SYTYCA two times! Danielle is also the general manager of the only Irish theatre company in the province, Tara Players, and has been performing with them since 1995. As always, she thanks her husband Kieran, and her boys Declan & Kevan for allowing her to pursue her acting dreams.

Rachel Smith (Performer, Opening Cabaret)

Rachel Smith is an actor, director, writer and acting coach. She specializes in Devised Theatre which gives her opportunities to create and produce her own work collaboratively and independently. She has a MA in Theatre & Performance from the University of Manchester, UK and a BA Honours in Theatre & Film from the University of Winnipeg. Rachel's recent acting credits include Sarasvāti Productions staged reading of *Breaking Through*, and her indie production *Where We're Bound*, part of the exhibit *Home* at Edge Gallery. Rachel is a co-founder of Antiscian Productions which will be producing *Insomnia* for *Nuit Blanche* Winnipeg 2017!

Angie St. Mars (Associate Producer, Sarasvāti Productions)

Angie St. Mars is a Winnipeg-based comedian and theatre artist. She has been featured in the Winnipeg Comedy Festival, the Winnipeg Comedy Showcase and ODDBLOCK Comedy Festival. Her most recent play *Mars One* joined physical theatre with the complexities of human settlement in outer space and was produced in the Winnipeg Fringe Festival and again at the Canadian Space Society Annual Summit. She writes and performs regularly with local sketch comedy troupe *President Bear* and is a staple of the live comedy game show *Pants On Fire*. She is thrilled to be a part of producing this awesome festival.

Judith Thompson (Guest Artist; Playwright, Mulgrave Road Theatre)

A highly esteemed Canadian playwright, Judith Thompson is the recipient of two Governor General's Literary Awards for Drama and an Officer in the Order of Canada. In 2007 she was awarded the prestigious Walter Carsen Prize for Excellence in the Performing Arts, in 2008 she was honoured with the Susan Smith Blackburn Award and the Dora Mavor Moore Outstanding New Play Award for *Palace of the End*, which was also awarded the Amnesty International Freedom of Expression Award. Her plays include *White Biting Dog*, *Lion in the Streets*, *I Am Yours*, *Such Creatures*, *The Thrill*, and *Watching Glory Die*.

FemFest 2017: Coming of Age

Artist and Production Team Bios

Chimwemwe Undi (Performer, Opening Cabaret)

Chimwemwe Undi is a poet living and writing on Treaty One territory in Winnipeg, Manitoba. Her work has appeared on stages at the Canadian Festival of Spoken Word and the Edinburgh Book Festival and in the pages of *CV2*, *Room and Prairie Fire*, among others. Her debut chapbook, *THE HABITUAL BE*, is out from University of Nebraska Press.

Rachel Young (Stage Manager, *Kit and Joe* and *New Beginnings*)

Rachel Young is thrilled to be a part of the *FemFest* team for the second time. Rachel is a recent graduate from the theatre department at The University of Winnipeg, specializing in stage management. Rachel got her start in theatre in a high school performance of *Little Shop of Horrors*, and fell in love with theatre ever since. In her spare time, Rachel enjoys listening to music and spending time outdoors.

Colin Wiens (Sound Designer, *Two Indians*)

Colin Wiens is a production and stage management student at the University of Winnipeg. He is in his final year and has been doing backstage work at a variety of different theatre companies while working towards his degree. Colin hopes to eventually become a sound designer with his own company.

Pebbles Willekes (Performer, *Tomboy Survival Guide*)

Pebbles Willekes was born and raised in Amsterdam. She wanted to be a musician after discovering punk-rock at 14. Pebbles picked up the bass in the early 90's. She toured Europe with an all girl funk/rock band (Nasty Girls), got signed by Sony Music (with pop/rock band Moonflower), and played TV shows with Girls Wanna Have Fun, a band of women from the Dutch pop/rock scene. After moving to Vancouver, Pebbles connected with Alison Gorman and Ivan Coyote, joined them in the butch choir Leadfoot, and became the new bassplayer for *Queer As Funk*, Vancouver's LGBTQ soul and funk band.

Erica Wilson (Performer, *Two Indians*)

Erica starting with theatre classes at MTYP and its former Aboriginal Arts Mentorship program, Erica has since worked with UITC, toured with Sarasvati Productions for their mental health project, *Shattered*, and their IWW *Cabaret of Monologues*, Merlyn Productions, and RMTC Assisting Directing *Sarah Ballenden*. In 2014, Erica was involved in reconciliation work with Canadian Roots Exchange. Erica has worked for the Indspire Awards for 4 consecutive years back stage as a talent associate. In her down time Erica seeks opportunities to grow, learn and share the knowledge from the inspirational people she has met along the way.

Pamela Wolk (Playwright, *Bake Off*)

Pamela Wolk's plays include *The Space Between Two*, *Chasing Rabbits* and *If I Grow Up*. Pamela Wolk's work has been work-shopped and produced by CBC Radio and self produced at the University of Regina and the 1st Saskatoon Women's Festival. She has won 3rd place in the Saskatchewan Playwright Association 24 Hour Playwriting Competition. Pamela holds an honours degree in Theatre Studies from the University of Regina. Most recently she is studying playwriting at PTE and has written a short play called *Starfish*.

Steve Yurkiw (Performer, *One Night Stand*)

Steve developed his love of the performing arts through over 30 years of singing and dancing with the Sokol Polish Folk Ensemble. He has appeared in *Quo Vadis* (That Way Productions), *Chess* (Ethereal Fantasy Productions), and *Guns Blazing* (Houses Within Houses Productions) during the Winnipeg Fringe Festival as well as in *West Side Story* (Rainbow Stage). He can be found on Twitter @stevey1963.

Sally Zori (Performer, *Tomboy Survival Guide*)

Born in Iraq and raised in the United Arab Emirates and different parts of Canada, Sally was drawn to percussion from a young age. They began with the Doumbek, a traditional middle eastern drum, then expanded to latin percussion and drum kit. A versatile musician, Sally performs in Vancouver groups *Queer as Funk* and *Tomboy Survival Guide*, has had the pleasure of performing in orchestras and small ensembles, and, for a brief moment in time, was the percussionist for Aretha Franklin.