

RISER EDMONTON 2023

# MINE

BY ASHLEIGH HICKS

STAGED READINGS

MARCH 4TH - 2:00PM

MARCH 5TH - 7:30PM



whynot



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*MINE* is presented in Amiskwaciy-wâskahikan, on  
Treat Six territory, the ancestral territories and  
meeting grounds of the Cree (nehiyaw), Cree-  
Iroquois, Dene, Saulteaux, Nakota Sioux,  
Blackfoot, and Metis peoples.

The story told in this play is based on true  
events that took place on Unama'ki, in  
Mi'kma'ki, the ancestral and unceded territory  
of the Mi'kmaq people.

## A N O T E F R O M T H E P L A Y W R I G H T

I was born and raised on Unama'ki (Cape Breton Island), until moving to Amiskwaciy-wâskahikan (Edmonton) with my family in 2006. I grew up in a community of former company towns - playing in neighbourhoods named after colliery numbers and walking to school past rows of 'company houses.'

The history that served as the inspiration for this play is alive and well in my hometown - and the economic and social ramifications of the coal industry are still felt in the region to this day. I was moved to write this play when I confronted the frustration I felt that this history was so little-known outside of the communities where it took place. I felt the urgent need to write this play as I witnessed a surge in advocacy and activism in support of labour rights and the working class in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Writing the script is only one small part of telling this story. A small community of incredibly passionate, hard-working, skilled individuals have come together to share this staged reading with you, including every person who has contributed to and supported this work since its inception. Theatre is an inherently communal art form, and I am honoured to have you joining in on this act of community.

We need each other. We will always need each other.

William Davis Miners' Memorial Day, in remembrance of those killed in Nova Scotia's coal mines, is marked every year on June 11th.

- Ash

# MINE CREATIVE TEAM

*Director:* Andrew Ritchie

*Dramaturg:* Evan Medd

*Stage Manager:* Andrea Murphy

*Set/Prop/Costume Designer:* Rebecca Cypher

*Sound Designer:* Zac Strom

*Lighting Designer:* Rory Turner

*Sound Operator:* Kris Sinding

*Lighting Operator:* Simon Wicks

*Producing Mentorship:* the Major Matt Mason Collective

*RISER Edmonton Producer:* Mac Brock

*RISER Edmonton Production Manager:* Kat Evans

*RISER Edmonton Associate Producer:* Steven Sobolewski

Patrick Lundeen – *Jimmy* & chorus

Kristen Padayas – *Aileen* & chorus

Geoffrey Simon Brown – *Willy* & chorus

Sarah Emslie – *Greer* & chorus

Marguerite Lawler – *Hughie* & chorus

Alexander Ariate – *Robbie* & chorus

Priya Narine – *Irma* & chorus

*with ASL interpreters* Robyn Lavender, Andrea Konowalec, Gail Benin, and Diane DeAndrade.

*with support from the Major Matt Mason Collective, Common Ground Arts Society, the Edmonton Arts Council, and the Canada Council for the Arts.*

*This is a Canadian Actors' Equity Association production under the Artists' Collective Policy.*

### **Andrew Ritchie - Director**



Andrew (he/him) is a director, theatre maker, improviser, and producer born and raised in Amiskwaciwaskahikan (Edmonton) on Treaty 6 territory. He is thrilled to be directing MINE and involved in such a positive and collaborative workshop process. While directing this play Andrew learned his oldest relative on his paternal side Walter Legget Ritchie was a coal miner near Edinburgh Scotland and died from a "fall of coal" in 1855. This death led to a series of events that brought his relatives to Canada. Currently he is artistic director of Thou Art Here Theatre and program coordinator with Theatre Alberta. He has an MFA in Directing/Creation from York University, BA in Drama from University of Alberta, is a graduate of the Banff/Citadel Professional Theatre Program and the Rosza Arts Management Program. Previously he was the Sandbox Series Coordinator & Theatre School Director at Globe Theatre (Regina, SK) and a co-founder and festival director of the Found Festival (Common Ground Arts).

### **Evan Medd - Dramaturg**



Evan Medd (he/they) is a dramaturg, producer, performer, climate activist, and puppeteer who works across Turtle Island. His practice primarily focuses on dramaturgical strategizing of process design, community engaged art that intersects with environmental dialogues, and collaborative new play development and production with the Alberta-based Major Matt Mason Collective. Evan spends his summers working in PEI at The River Clyde Pageant, a community integrated outdoor spectacle that celebrates a social ecology while drawing attention to the impact of climate change on PEI's waterways and ecosystems. Evan has also recently spearheaded a new initiative called Dreaming Climate Consciousness, a collaborative process where participants work together to imagine eco-conscious futures through the lens of speculative/science fiction. Evan is passionate about utilizing creative practice as a means to stimulate imaginations while interrogating and examining the tensions that define our world.

### **Ashleigh Hicks - Playwright/Producer**



Ashleigh Hicks (they/she) is a playwright, performer, dramaturg, and clown currently based in amiskwaciwâskahikan. They hold a BA Honours Drama (First Class Standing) from the University of Alberta, and have trained in clown and neo-bouffon at the Manitoulin Conservatory for Creation & Performance, where they were a 2018 artist-in-residence. As a playwright, their works have been presented with the Edmonton Fringe Festival, Theatre Network's Nextfest, the Skirtsafire Festival, the Tomo Suro Players' About Love Festival, Montreal's Rose Festival, and RISER Edmonton. As a dramaturg and academic, Ash is focused on care ethics as models of process in new play development.



### **Andrea Murphy - Stage Manager**

Andrea Murphy (she/her) is a theatre artist based in Edmonton on Treaty 6 territory. A graduate of the BFA Stage Management program at the University of Alberta in 2015, Andrea has worked primarily in new work creation and site specific theatre. This is her first time working in a workshop and honestly 30/10. No notes. Thank you for coming to the show and thank you to the wonderful team that has come together to make MINE happen!



### **Rebecca Cypher - Costume/Props Designer**

Rebecca is an emerging, queer, POC theatre artist living and working in Amiskwaciwâskahikan, also known as Edmonton, Alberta. Currently her work is focused on set, costume, lighting, and puppet design. She likes to approach design with a hands-on approach and enjoys exploring and making discoveries with other artists. She believes in the importance of understanding the materials she designs with, and has experience as a scenic painter, junior stitcher, and puppet builder. She is a recent graduate from the University of Alberta's Bachelor of Fine Arts in Theatre Production, specializing in design and was chosen to participate in Citadel Theatre's RBC Horizon emerging Artists Program. Recently she assisted with costumes and props on *In My Own Little Chair*. You can see her work next door in the Westbury Theatre as assistant projection designer on *The Space Between Stars* at SkirtsAfire Festival until March 12th.



### **Zac Strom - Sound Designer, stage directions**

Zac Strom (they/them) is a queer theatre artist based in amiskwaciwâskahikan. They are a recent graduate of the University of Alberta's BFA in Acting program. Along with a deep passion for performing, they have become absolutely captivated by the practice of sound design, with a particular interest in designing for theatre work that is new or in development. They are so incredibly grateful to be part of MINE!

Select Sound Design Credits include:

*Creature of Habit* (Azimuth Theatre, upcoming), *New Mythic Works Series* (Thousand Faces Festival), *interWEBBED* (Nextfest 2022), *Hysteria Winthrop* (Play the Fool 2022), *The Parade* (Honest Bandits Theatre), *LOST IN CONNECTION* (Fluid Fest 2020), *Mad Forest* (University of Alberta)



### **Rory Turner - Lighting Designer**

Rory is a designer, performer, and theatre maker from the prairies. He is interested in slow music, postcards, toy theatres, and masks. Rory attended the Theatre Arts program at MacEwan University and studied Design at the University of Alberta.



### **Patrick Lundeen - Jimmy & chorus**

Patrick graduated from the National Theatre School of Canada's Acting Program in 2009. Later that year he co-founded Edmonton's Common Ground Arts Society where he was a key artistic producer until 2016. He is thrilled to now be participating in a Common Ground project. Patrick has performed with Shakespeare in the Park, Pyretic Productions, Citadel Theatre and Workshop West Theatre. He's worked as an actor and assistant director for several film and TV projects. For four seasons Patrick was the associate director of outreach and education at the Citadel Theatre. Since 2017 Patrick has focused on developing his own artistic company Pyretic Productions and presenting premieres of new work by Alberta Playwrights but is happy to now be getting back on the stage.



### **Kristen Padayas - Aileen & chorus**

Kristen (She/Her) is a South Asian/Portuguese actor/producer currently residing on Treaty 7 territory also known as Calgary, Alberta. She is a graduate of Grant MacEwan College's Theatre Arts Program and the University of Alberta's Bachelor of Fine Arts Acting Program. Most recent acting credits include: The Scarlet Letter (Theatre Calgary), The Wedding Party, The Jungle Book (Alberta Theatre Projects), Sherlock Holmes & the Raven's Curse, Murder in the Studio (Vertigo Theatre), The Strid (Downstage Theatre), A Fit, Happy Life, A Grand Time in the Rapids (Teatro la Quindicina), Barvinok (Pyretic Productions). She is an Associate Producer with Chromatic Theatre and a Co-Artistic Producer with Impossible Mongoose. This year she is a part of Chromatic Theatre's Playwrights' Unit as a producer and is also writing her first play as part of the Unit! She is also writing a new play for Concrete Theatre's Sprouts Festival. Kristen thanks her husband Dan for all his love and support.



### Geoffrey Simon Brown - Willy & chorus

Geoffrey Simon Brown is an award-winning Albertan playwright, actor, and theatre creator. He is a founding member of the Major Matt Mason Collective where he has produced small-scale independent theatre for the past decade. Recent Edmonton credits include the premiere productions of his plays *Michael Mysterious* (Pyretic Productions) and *Night* (Major Matt Mason Collective presented by Common Ground Arts Society) as well as performing in *Deathtrap* (Teatro LIVE!) and *Re:Construct* (RISER, Edmonton Fringe). His other plays include *The Circle*, *Still Still Still*, *Control*, *Air*, *Destroy*, *If I Could Tell You Everything* (written alongside the Theatre Junction high school mentorship ensemble), and the most recent adaptation(s) of *A Christmas Carol* for Theatre Calgary. He is a graduate of the National Theatre School of Canada's playwriting program. More at [geoffreysimonbrown.com](http://geoffreysimonbrown.com).



### Sarah Emslie - Greer & chorus

Sarah Emslie is a queer theatre artist based in amiskwaciwâskahikan, Treaty 6. They hold a BFA from the University of Alberta in Acting. Catch them in *The Space Between Stars* (Small Matters Productions), currently a part of the Skirtsafire Festival. Their love to Gabriel and Thistle.



### Marguerite Lawler - Hughie & chorus

Marguerite Lawler is an actor, comedian, improviser and musician living on Treaty 6 Territory. Recent credits include: *The Wolves* (Citadel/Maggie Tree), *Titus Bouffonius* (Theatre Network, Sterling Nomination), *The Blank Who Stole Christmas* (RFT), *Hamlet in Isolation* (Thou Art Here), and *Ren & the Wake* (Catch the Keys/Fringe Theatre). They are a performer with RapidFire Theatre, where you can see them in the brand new theatre in shows like *OffBook: The Improvised Musical*, *The Kelly & Marg Experience*, *Big Nasty Hook* and more. They also improvise with Die-Nasty, and write and perform sketch comedy around town. Big thanks to the MINE team!





**Alexander Ariate - Robbie & chorus**

Alex is incredibly proud to be working on such a wonderful piece of theatre with this amazing cast and team. You may have recently seen Alex down in Calgary in the Murder on the Orient Express (Vertigo Theatre) or locally in CLUE (Citadel Theatre), and Peter Pan Goes Wrong (Citadel Theatre and The Arts Club). Alex's recent interests include professional wrestling history, bread making, tarot reading, pina colodas, and getting caught in the rain. He hopes you enjoy the reading!



**Priya Narine - Irma & chorus**

Priya Narine (she/her) is a mixed-race actor, singer, and shameless Swiftie currently based in amiskwaciwâskahikan (Edmonton). She is delighted to be working on this beautiful piece with this beautiful group of artists. Previous theatre credits include: A Christmas Carol (Citadel), Measure For Measure and A Midsummer Night's Dream (Freewill Shakespeare Festival), Queen Lear is Dead (Fox Den Collective), and Slight of Mind (Citadel/Theatre Yes). Priya is a graduate of the University of Alberta's BFA Acting program. Endless love and thanks to her friends and family for their support.

*MINE was initially developed through the Major Matt Mason Collective's Wildfire Development Unit 2021-2022 with the following creative team:*

*Dramaturgy by Evan Medd*

*Mike Tan – Jimmy & chorus*

*Kristen Padayas – Aileen & chorus*

*Geoffrey Simon Brown – Willy & chorus*

*Sarah Emslie – Greer, Irma, chorus*

*Luigi Riscaldino – Robbie, The Boss, chorus*

*Howard Dai – Hughie, Doug, chorus*

*SPECIAL THANKS TO*

Mike Tan, Luigi Riscaldino, Howard Dai, Cat Bengal, Mat Simpson, Cole Rockarts, Carly Neis, Connor Yuzwenko-Martin, Shyanne Duquette, Chris Reynolds, Beth Dart, Selina Painchaud, Kristi Hansen, Gina Puntil, Lana Michelle Hughes, Edmonton Fringe Theatre, the Playhouse, Strathcona High School, UPS on Whyte, and the Sluggo family.