



Standing united & standing up

AN INCLUSIVE AND CARING
SCHOOL FOR THE ARTS

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR GRADUATES OF THE CLASS OF 2021!

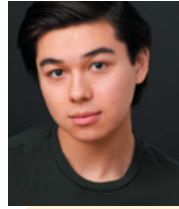
— ACTING



Mohamed Ahmed
(Edmonton, AB)



isi bhakhomen
(Toronto, ON)



Justin Eddy
(London, ON)



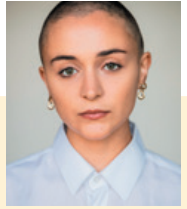
Isabel Fuentes
(Ottawa, ON)



Kaeleb Gartner
(Redwood Meadows, AB)



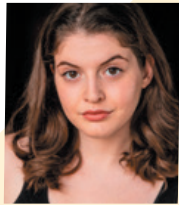
Callan McKenna Potter
(Stratford, ON)



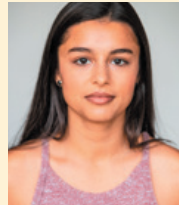
Anna Morreale
(Hamilton, ON)



Annie Rutherford
(Toronto, ON)



Romi Shraiter
(Toronto, ON,
Tel-Aviv-Yafo, Israel)



Mara Teare
(Saskatoon, SK)



Dylan Thomas-Bouchier
(Fort McKay, AB)



Grace Vukovic
(Vancouver, BC)



Hilary Wheeler
(Victoria, BC)

— PRODUCTION DESIGN AND TECHNICAL ARTS



Brendan Agnew
(Vancouver, BC)



Ava Bishop
(Calgary, AB)



Caitlin Farley
(Wetaskiwin, AB)



Tiffany Ledesma
(Toronto, ON)



Aurora Torok
(Oakville, ON)



Brianna Unger
(Ajax, ON)



Hailey Verbonac
(Inuvik, NT)

— CRÉATION ET PRODUCTION



Audrey Belzile
(Rimouski, QC)



Tristan-Olivier Breiding
(Orléans, ON)



Sarah Gagné
(Winnipeg, MB)



Marguerite Hudon
(Montréal, QC)



Fabien Locas
(Montréal, QC)



Isabelle Paquette
(Montréal, QC)

— PLAYWRITING



Sarah Currie
(Whitby, ON)



Jena McLean
(Fredericton, NB)

— ÉCRITURE DRAMATIQUE



Alice Tixidre
(Montréal, QC)



Laurie Léveillé
(Sherbrooke, QC)

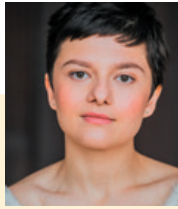
— INTERPRÉTATION COHORTE 2017



Mark Breton
(Montréal, QC)



Émy Drolet
(Victoriaville, QC)



Clémence Dufresne-Deslières
(Montréal, QC)



Irdens Exantus
(Laval, QC)



Camille Giguère-Côté
(Montréal, QC)



Fabrice Girard
(Montréal, QC)



Maxime-Olivier Potvin
(La Prairie, QC)



Salématou Sakho
(Montréal, QC)



Lydia Sherknies
(Montréal, QC)

— INTERPRÉTATION COHORTE 2018



Stéphanie Arav-Clocchiatti
(Montréal, QC)



Zoé Boudou
(Montréal, QC)



Louis Carrière
(Montréal, QC)



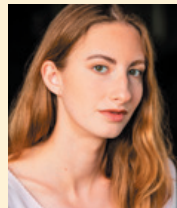
Amadou Madani Tall
(Montréal, QC)



Sarah Pernod
(Saint-Sorlin-en-Bugey, France)



Jonathan Massove
(Sainte-Marie, île de La Réunion)



Charlotte Raoutenfeld
(Montréal, QC)



Anna Sanchez
(Montréal, QC)



Jean-Luc Terriault
(Laval, QC)

— INDEPENDENT STUDY



Cherissa Richards
(Winnipeg, MB)

— SCÉNOGRAPHIE / SET AND COSTUME DESIGN



Jung A Im
(Séoul, Corée du Sud)



Ange Bledja Kouassi
(Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire)

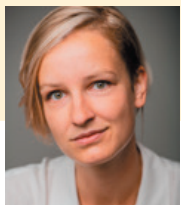


Maryanna Chan
(Saskatoon, SK)



Joanna Gourdin
(Maisons-Alfort, France)

— MISE EN SCÈNE



Isabelle Bartkowiak
(Victoriaville, QC, Moncton, NB)



Mayumi Ide-Bergeron
(Montréal, QC)



Margot Lacoste
(Pessac, France)



Daria Miscia
(Milan, Italie)

OUR MISSION


To serve the evolving needs of Canadian theatre, the National Theatre School of Canada (NTS):

- Provides incomparable training in French and English to actors, directors, playwrights, designers and production specialists to prepare them to work in professional theatre;
- Delivers a broad range of community programs in order to make theatre more accessible to all Canadians.

OUR VISION

As a global leader in theatre training, NTS shares its expertise and resources with a broad and diverse community of Canadians to ensure that the performing arts continue to play an important role in society.

NTS TEAM

 [Meet our team here](#)

Émile Beaudoin Lafortune (Création et production, 2018) in *Cercles/Fictions*, by Joël Pommerat, dir. Sébastien Dodge, Set design Christos Darlasis (Set and Costume Design, 2019) and Marine Plasse (Set and Costume Design, 2019), light design and technical director Claire Seyller (Création et production, 2018), costume design Jeanne Dupré (Scénographie, 2019) and Claudie Landry (Scénographie, 2019), February 2018 . Photo: Maxime Côté.



WORD FROM THE CHAIR

— ALBERTA G. CEFIS

Chair of the Board of Directors

A SECOND YEAR UNDER THE PANDEMIC'S SHADOW

Yet another year has passed under the shadow of the pandemic and its devastating effects on the economy in general, and the cultural world in particular creating even greater vulnerability for a second year without a public and the direct revenues associated with normal activities.

As well as remaining supportive of our arts and school communities, NTS accomplished quite a feat in getting through the year by maintaining most activities in person and seamlessly completing its theatrical season. I would like to thank the entire team, who were able to create new ways of doing things, and who worked relentlessly to ensure that the school year would be a success.

STEADFAST SUPPORT FROM OUR PARTNERS

Despite the difficult circumstances, we have received exceptional help from our public partners, thanks to the steadfast support of **Canadian Heritage** and the **Ministère de la Culture et des Communications du Québec**. Without forgetting, of course, the many **patrons, foundations, and companies**, who have provided unwavering support and, in many cases, have increased their contributions. It is through this incredible dedication and generosity that, despite everything, the School has been able to maintain its high level of excellence.

OUR MAJOR PROJECTS

Several major projects were developed during the year, notably the **NTS DramaFest**, which was able to adapt to pandemic conditions in record time by moving to an interactive online platform. Over 1000 youths from across Canada, supported by the artistic engagement team, were able to express themselves and share their art without fear of judgment. A wonderful achievement.

Let's not forget the progress we've made on our new **NTS Centre for Innovation and Experimentation** at the Monument-National. The Centre's mission is to create the theatre of tomorrow and support our

community in the face of an ever-evolving public, which has become all the more necessary in an environment of continual cultural change.

THE BOARD'S ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES

With all this good news, I would like to take the opportunity to welcome to the Board, **Anne-Marie Ethier**, Audit Partner and Group Leader of Municipal Québec/NCR at Deloitte Canada. I would also like to acknowledge the departure of **Richard Brott**, who had graciously accepted to take on the role of Treasurer for one year. Thank you so much, Richard!

IN MEMORIAM

We are all greatly saddened by the loss of several people close to the NTS community, particularly **Michel Gosselin**, program director of the **Création et Production** program from 2000 to 2010; **Alexis Bluteau**, technical director of the **Création et Production** program in 2005; and **Robert E. Landry**, Life Governor and former Board Chair.

THE CONCLUSION OF MY MANDATE AS CHAIR

I have sat on the NTS Board of Directors since 2012 and have been Board Chair since 2018. At that time, I replaced the highly esteemed Bernard Amyot, Esq. Soon, I too will take my leave and my successor will be announced shortly. I will, however, continue to serve on the Finance & Audit and Investment Committees.

During my tenure on the Board, I have witnessed a great many changes at the School:

- A major restructuring of the Administration, which began two years ago and will soon be complete. This will allow for greater efficiency and flexibility by streamlining the management and day-to-day operations of NTS teams so that they are better able to adjust to the future;
- An acceleration of the pedagogical integration of the English and French sections through the creation of transversal associations;

- The creation of community-based programs, geared to **various target markets**, with an array of programs complementary to NTS's mission in order to expand the School's pedagogical reach;
- Artistic residencies tailored to Indigenous artists as well as other Canadian communities who are invited to perfect their art in a creative and collaborative setting;
- NTS taking over the management of the national drama festival, DramaFest, in which over 15,000 young people from across Canada have participated.

On a more personal note, together with my Board colleagues and the CEO, we have embarked in the past years on a journey of Board renewal and governance best practices; strengthened the financial and investment infrastructure of the School; supported the implementation of a new strategic vision and organizational redesign, that has seen the School widen its reach to offer Community programs across the country; and together we have navigated the turbulent waters

of the pandemic and embraced an environment of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion to emerge as a stronger and better organization.

I am therefore leaving the institution in excellent financial health to face the future with a solid funding structure.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Lastly, I would like to thank my **colleagues of the Board**, its **Governors**, the **NTS team**, **teachers** and, the **students**, who have consistently inspired and motivated me. A special mention must go to **Gideon Arthurs**, our gifted CEO, with whom I have had the immense pleasure of working in close collaboration all these years to support his vision and the many initiatives he has spearheaded in bringing about profound changes at the School at both the administrative and pedagogical levels. Gideon, it has been a rewarding journey to work with you and I wish you and the School much continued success.



2021 Acting graduates in an exploration of Paula Vogel's play *Indecent*, directed by Mike Payette. Performed in the Ludger-Duvernay theatre in December 2020.
Photo: Maxime Côté



MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

— GIDEON ARTHURS

GRATITUDE

Whereas 2020 was supposed to be a year of celebration for the 60th anniversary of the National Theatre School of Canada (NTS)'s founding, we found ourselves faced with a second year of pandemic conditions. Nevertheless, we were able to meet the many challenges brought on by these exceptional circumstances by developing new competencies and, more importantly, by maintaining our training programs in the most normal way possible. As far as we are concerned, our students and the quality of their training are always given top priority.

It is, therefore, with great pride that I am able to say we have come through this trying period with flying colours: there have been no COVID-19 outbreaks within our walls, over 80% of our school activities were held in person, and we were able to showcase the students' entire theatre season. On top of all that, we managed to further develop our community-based activities, including our nationwide festival.

This momentum and success were made possible through the extraordinary collaboration of our NTS teams. Therefore, it is with a deep sense of gratitude towards all NTS students, staff, my management team and the Board of Directors that I am able to end this unusual year with the great feeling of "mission accomplished". Thank you and congratulations to one and all!

RENEWAL

We took advantage of this challenging period to develop various projects, particularly the new NTS Research and Development Hub, which was further refined and concretized when its first labs were created. This new centre is at the heart of a redefined and renewed ambition for our signature campus, the Monument-National (N-M), through an innovation hub in the city's epicentre with a forward-looking mission and the unfurling of new theatrical forms, all for the benefit of our entire community who will not only be able to make use of it, but also participate in its development through meaningful partnerships.

Although we were not actually able to present our NTS DramaFest in the schools, we did manage to develop an interactive online platform within three short months. What a feat! It was through this platform that over one thousand participants across Canada were able to take part, express their ideas, and communicate with others. Best of all, it helped to overcome the isolation that our young creative artists have been subject to, all within a respectful and safe framework. This platform, which was developed in response to the pandemic, will continue to be used in the future as a catalyst to bolster the Festival by digitizing content and making it available anywhere in the country.

EQUITY, DIVERSITY, AND INCLUSION

Since last year, NTS has taken various steps to develop a true forum for sharing and discourse around the themes of diversity and inclusion. We have posted a series of articles on our website under the heading *Community Announcements*, to share various responses from those close to NTS, including its detractors, to ensure open dialogue on this prevalent and necessary social movement.

This spring, while we were still wrapped up in the events surrounding George Floyd's murder and the subsequent Black Lives Matter protests organized throughout the summer, we experienced a new collective shock and brutal wake-up call when the unmarked graves of children were discovered on the grounds of former Canadian residential schools. The School quickly implemented a host of measures to ensure our active engagement in this movement for equity, diversity, and inclusion:

- For our students, we have **added a diversity-based resource person** to provide support during their academic journey;
- We **created the Equity, Diversity, Inclusion Advisory Committee (EDIAC)**, composed of a diverse and comprehensive array of stakeholders. This committee will provide leadership to working groups on matters related to diversity, inclusion, and equity, decolonization, and the elimination of discrimination at NTS;

In the spring of 2021, we created the Indigenous Advisory Circle whose main objective is to help shape the School's pedagogical content, and to unite the French and English sections through Indigenous artistic approaches.

— GIDEON ARTHURS

- Over the next few years, we will be **investing 1 million in anti-racism projects and decolonization activities** to be carried out at an institutional level. This investment will, through concrete actions, help us identify and abolish systemic racism within NTS;
- The Board of Directors has **adopted a resolution to create an anti-racist and decolonized school**. The following is an excerpt from the resolution adopted on July 23, 2020:
 1. Make anti-racism, decolonization, diversity, and inclusion the number one priority and the focus of an action plan with concrete goals and timelines for both the Board and the School, covering organizational structure, policies, membership, strategic goals, and program delivery;
 2. Create a sustainable, anti-racist, decolonized, and inclusive school where students, staff, teachers and the overall community are heard, respected, valued, and empowered;
 3. Understand, support, and take the necessary steps to decolonize the School, and undertake these actions with renewed commitment, ensuring that the necessary resources are in place to carry out this work;
 4. Involve and give voice to students, staff, teachers and the Black, Indigenous and racialized communities in these efforts to develop a truly anti-racist and decolonized institution;
 5. Seek out a rich variety of cultural experiences, perspectives, and talents, and draw valuable life lessons from them;
 6. Welcome people from all walks of life to the School and its community and foster a culture based on respect, openness, learning, integrity, and honesty;

7. Establish accountability mechanisms for the Board, teachers, and staff to ensure that the work undertaken continues to move forward.

In the spring of 2021, we created the Indigenous Advisory Circle whose main objective is to help shape the School's pedagogical content, and to unite the French and English sections through Indigenous artistic approaches. Composed of a diverse group of artists from various First Nations and former NTS students, this committee provides the opportunity to learn about cultural and artistic practices through an Indigenous lens and integrate these approaches into our pedagogy.

MOVING FORWARD

Ever since my arrival at NTS, I have been determined to expand and share the School's pedagogical and artistic expertise gained since its founding in 1960. The quality of customized training is not only recognized within Quebec and Canada, but increasingly on the world stage as our graduates actively pursue their careers far and wide, in all theatrical spheres and the arts in general. Yet, there is more to be done.... The future is at our doorstep and, for the coming year, I intend to see to it that we achieve four key objectives that are close to my heart:

Objective 1: Develop the already outstanding quality of NTS professional training by restructuring the M-N to be used as a pedagogical tool to further the School's mission. To achieve this, we will soon conduct a second study in view of a possible investment project, to identify the building's heritage assets as well as the necessary technical upgrades to provide an optimal framework for this major renovation project. We will also need to reflect on how to clearly align M-N's pedagogical mission as well as achieve a common understanding of the NTS Research and Development Hub. We have already allocated additional human resources and project funding to speed up the process for this new centre.



Wanderson Santos
(Mise en scène, Brazil) in
the Lab LX in June 2021.
Photo: Laurence Plouffe

Objective 2: Expand our strategies for community engagement, particularly through the NTS DramaFest which, because of its national scope, allows us to extend out training methods beyond Quebec's borders. In addition, the Festival can also serve as a way to bolster our communities and partners through the use of the online platform developed last winter, giving near-universal access to the Festival's content and activities.

Objective 3: Strengthen relationships with our partners, whether institutions or Indigenous groups or individual artists, to develop even stronger ties for sharing, exchanges, and especially, inclusion. We will soon implement an internal transformation process to integrate this approach in all of the School's actions and structures, whether at the administrative, pedagogical, or organizational level.

Objective 4: Generate additional revenues to support the School's vision based on a scenario in which public funding is likely to dry up over the next few years. Since we have several projects to carry out, we need to ensure we have the means to do so and find innovative ways to make the projects self-financing. We also need to consolidate our current private revenues in an environment where the hunt for funding is increasingly competitive. With our newly restructured Administration, which has allowed for the creation of a new external relations division, we have given ourselves the tools we need to pursue these new sources of financing.

THANK YOU, ALBERTA!

Alberta G. Cefis has sat on the NTS Board of Directors since 2012. She is also Chair of the Investment Committee and has been the Board's Chair since 2018, a first in the history of our organization.

Throughout her long and illustrious career in the banking sector, Alberta has broken through the

glass ceiling time and time again. Multilingual (she speaks four languages) and multicultural, Alberta has travelled and worked all over the world. She is a graduate of McGill where she earned a Bachelor of Arts, Joint Honours in Political Science and Italian Literature, followed by an MBA.

She has sat on various boards. You guessed it, she is engaged, passionate, generous, and very professional in all her that she does.

From my arrival at the School, almost eight years ago now, Alberta has provided me with advice, guidance, and above all, steadfast support. Without her input and dedication, I would not have been able to bring about so many positive changes, and so quickly.

Alberta has always proved extremely thorough in her capacity as Board Chair. She has also invested a great deal of effort in "professionalizing" our methods and procedures to improve our overall performance. Furthermore, she was a great help in setting up performance measures. Her level of excellence and high expectations have been motivated the Board and the members of the School administration. Alberta has been a leader and mentor for many and her level of personal commitment is boundless.

Driven by that same strong sense of rigour, Alberta has decided to pass the torch and will be resigning as Board Chair in November, while ensuring a smooth transition. The Board's next chair will be announced soon.

In the meantime, dear Alberta, on behalf of the students, past and present, staff, partners and the Board, I wish to thank you wholeheartedly for everything you have done for the School, as well as for the Canada's entire Arts and Culture community.



MESSAGES FROM THE ARTISTIC DIRECTORS

— ALISA PALMER

Director Acting, Directing and Residency Programs
Artistic Director, English Section

COLLABORATION AND CREATIVITY IN A PANDEMIC

My colleagues in the English Section are a crack team of artist educators. We were just hitting our stride as a team before COVID, and the pandemic catapulted us into the stratosphere in terms of collaboration and creativity; two things, coincidentally, that are central to life in the theatre. I invite you to look at our website for a reminder of the various accomplishments of our students, coaches, and resident artists during this year of pandemic training; whether it's the staging of *Indecent*, a play with live music, or two premieres of new plays by our graduating playwrights, for the first time presented on our large stage or everything else in between, the accomplishments of the past year are many.

THE SHOW MUST GO ON

On the professional end, I think NTS was one of the most prolific generators of live theatre in North America over the past year, which is remarkable. Above all, we managed to keep our community safe and moving forward together. This is thanks to the support and creativity of our administrative team, guided by Gideon, as well as the ingenuity of all our artistic collaborators across the school. The phrase “the show must go on”, like so many clichés, has its roots in the truth. Theatre artists are experts in adapting to change in circumstances.

Last year the show did indeed go on: adapted, constrained, re-framed, and at first, virtually unrecognizable behind various masks and plastic shields. But the training continued and it worked its magic, thanks to the students who showed up and said “yes” day after day, regardless of the strange and at times overwhelming context. We had an incredibly productive year.

Throughout, my team worked and achieved at a level that went far above and beyond the call of duty. Thanks to the extraordinary commitment and stellar ingenuity demonstrated daily by our

program directors and full-time teachers, we are emerging from the past year not only in one piece but armed with new ideas and inspiration. Most striking of all, we not only survived this past year, we have grown; outwardly, by expanding our community of artist teachers, associates, curriculae and artistic practices, and internally via a deepened understanding of what holistic education, that core principle of NTS education, really means for us as artists, educators, colleagues, and members of the NTS community.

OUTWARD GROWTH

In terms of outward growth, last spring, I invited the English section to renew our commitment to inclusivity. I shared a document with practical suggestions along with concrete measurables to better assess our continuing transformation into a more inclusive arts school. The arrival of the pandemic and the vital overdue reckonings with inequity and injustice that accompanied it, tested our capacity to live up to our own teaching; to be the change we want to see. Over the past year, each program director in the section welcomed new Associate Artists to their program, to create a circle of professional artists, all members of equity seeking communities, who provided concrete leadership and support to our staff and students. We introduced new teachers, and at times established new teaching teams, in order to ensure that students had access to diverse viewpoints and approaches in our classrooms and studios and across disciplines. Our curriculum, which at NTS is always a living entity, has continued to evolve, and include practices and materials by artists of diverse backgrounds throughout all programs in the section. For example, we have created a new program called New Pathways under the leadership of Program Director Andrea Lundy in partnership with Native Earth, to support Indigenous artists training in Production Design and Technical Arts. In these ways, we are ensuring the active presence of diverse practices, perspectives, varied approaches, and a range of diverse artists, woven consistently

Over the past year, our connection to one another and to the work has deepened. We have, like so many others, had to reckon with the fragility beneath our tenacity; this has deepened our mutual appreciation and respect as collaborators.

— ALISA PALMER

and equitably throughout all the programs in our section.

Two new full-time positions have been created for artists who are leaders in inclusive practices. Last year Jani Lauzon joined me as Associate Director in the Acting Program. After an incredibly productive year with her in that capacity, I created the role of Associate Director, English Section, a role designed with and for Jani, to ensure her leadership wields influence beyond the Acting program and has a transformative effect on the whole of the English section. One of the first results of Jani's tenure is the creation of the Indigenous Advisory Circle. This advisory is made up of Indigenous alumnae of NTS from both our longstanding programs and our more recent Indigenous Artist in Residence program. The Indigenous Advisory creates connection between the two sections, French and English, braiding them together via the shared experience of Indigenous Artistic practices. Several times during the year, both sections along with the administration, will come together to experience Indigenous artistic practices from across Turtle Island. I believe this is a paradigm shift that bring deep and long-lasting transformation to our school and to our understanding of Canadian theatre. I'm grateful to Frédéric and Gideon for their support of this initiative, perhaps the only one of its kind in an arts learning centre.

Above all I'm grateful to Jani for her creative leadership. I hope you will hear more about this initiative from Jani herself.

Quincy Armorer, NTS' inaugural Associate Artist who joined the school four years ago, has just completed a brilliant 10-year tenure as AD of Black Theatre Workshop and I am delighted to share with you that I have

brought him on board as the Associate Director of the Acting Program. I'm honoured to have Quincy join me in a leadership role as we continue to shape our section to better serve our students and transform our art form.

This expansion of the section has been, in part, aided by one of the banes of pandemic existence – zoom. Our section is challenged by a vast geographic canvas. Zoom allowed us to integrate artists from across the country with a consistency that we had never before experienced. Our English Section meetings, which bring together students from all programs, could also now include our Associate artists who are based all over the country. This has allowed us to activate a larger, more diverse community (with the added perk of having less impact on the climate). This also had a positive impact on what we could offer the students or more rightly who we could offer the students – this being key to realizing our commitment to ongoing expansion and diversification of our training. We have decided to selectively incorporate some of these pandemic practices, such as zoom gathering, into the next school year. It has allowed the students, program directors and core teachers alike to feel less isolated and better supported as they move forward and face fresh, unforeseen challenges.

INTERNAL GROWTH

On this note I want to mention how we have grown internally. Over the past year, our connection to one another and to the work has deepened. We have, like so many others, had to reckon with the fragility beneath our tenacity; this has deepened our mutual appreciation and respect as collaborators. We had to show up for each other more than ever last year, ask for help at times, and accept it with humility when it came our way as it so often did. I believe this environment has positively affected our students as well. I saw my team model remarkable resilience day after day, for their students and for each other. For all its hardships and challenges, the past year has also been characterized by pronounced

Second-year Acting student in a mask workshop, May 2021. Photo: Maxime Côté



Living art must be in constant dialogue with the present. However uncertain. The show must go on because stories are how we can understand our lives, ourselves, and our shared moment.

— ALISA PALMER

compassion. I believe it is through that compassion, that we have deepened our understanding of the true meaning of professionalism; and that, crucially, we have been better able to help the students to understand in turn; professionalism goes beyond productivity. Professionalism requires that you show up as you are, with your fear and uncertainty, along with your creativity, on your sleeve; to ask for help when you need it; to have the grace to accept help when it is offered. It requires that you speak up for yourself thus making your community stronger by revealing your needs and vulnerability. It is this kind of courage in relationship that is at the core of artistic excellence. With this in mind, the phrase “the show must go on” takes on a new meaning. The show must go on because of the challenges we are facing, not in spite of them. Living art must be in constant dialogue with the present. However uncertain. The show must go on because stories are how we can understand our lives, ourselves, and our shared moment.

In this vein, I want to acknowledge that while my team is inspired it is also worn. We are not alone in this, I know. We share hope and are optimistic about bringing our discoveries and developments from last year forward into this new school year, but we still face many unknowns. And we are tasked with guiding young people who are more vulnerable than we are, without having completely restored our own reserves which we expended last year.

We’re grateful for the presence of Marc André and Dona, the student services team new to the school, and a dream team in so many ways. We hear, and share, their concerns for our community

of young people who have been shaped by an extended period characterized by fear, isolation, and volatility. One of our teachers observed that the school provides excellent support for its students but no matter how “safe” the school becomes, the students’ greatest fear is in fact the fear of feeling their own emotions. Our task now it would seem is to encourage young artists to experience what they feel and express that in their art, and hopefully to understand that vulnerability is not only a personal risk, but an artistic strength.

A PROMISING YEAR AHEAD

I envision a next year full of promise; our section has expanded, we have a groaning board of talents and perspectives, one that is still growing. Our students are hopeful and looking to us for continued guidance. And while we eagerly embrace the return to “normal” we must not do so at the cost of forgetting what we’ve learned. I hope that the depth of feeling we’ve shared across our communities will continue to resonate. And to remind us that, uncomfortable as it may at times be, the ability to feel profoundly is key to our creative engine. It fuels our way forward and will infuse our “next normal” with compassion, patience, and a respect for the value and power of vulnerability. This is the best way to ensure that whatever show goes on is one that is worth experiencing.



From left to right: Romi Shraiter (Acting, 2021), Justin Eddy (Acting, 2021), and Dylan Thomas-Bouchier (Acting, 2021) in *To Those Who Wait in Fear*, created collectively by the Acting Class of 2021, dir. ahdri zhina mandiola, Set and costume Co-Designer Margarita Brodie (Set and Costume Design, 2020), Costume Co-Designer Daria Miscia (Set and Costume Design, 2021), lighting designer Aurora Torok (Production Design and Technical Arts, 2021), video designer Brendan Agnew (Production Design and Technical Arts, 2021), June 2021.
Photo: Maxime Côté



MESSAGES FROM THE ARTISTIC DIRECTORS

— FRÉDÉRIC DUBOIS

Artistic Director, French Section

To be joyful in the midst of a storm is a powerful act of resistance.

AN AMAZING YEAR IS COMING TO A CLOSE. AND I WEIGH MY WORDS CAREFULLY.

Through thick and thin, we have accomplished the impossible. The school year culminated with graduation ceremonies marked by joy and pride because we had braved each moment together.

WE DID WHAT WE DO BEST: WE INNOVATED.

An amazing year is coming to a close.

We can finally say that the period of double graduating classes is behind us. Never had we imagined that this last transitional phase would become so muddled, especially since we had spent four years planning every step of this significant changeover so that everything would run smoothly. And, although life had other plans, everything turned out in the end; everything turned out very well.

In fact, we have scheduled two new shows for the fall that will meet the prevailing health measures, two magnificent shows; we have also mounted a four-and-a-half-hour Shakespearian fresco with 18 actors, who will all be wearing masks and keeping their distance...

And finally, we saw through the works of our graduating authors (fourth year) and presented their artistically powerful journey beyond our walls (third year).

An almost unimaginable feat under the circumstances.

The only thing to mar the scene, obviously, was the lack of an audience. Student shows are a perfect opportunity for young artists to get noticed. However, we have made every effort to overcome the present situation: high-quality recordings, video theatre demos, recorded podcasts of readings, etc. Nevertheless, the first graduating class of our new

three-year program did not get the chance to play before a real audience during their entire training. We are now figuring out how we can make up for that.

It was the same experience for our Directing program graduate, whose production had to be cancelled in March 2020, like that our 2021 graduate. Both shows have been rescheduled for this December.

The crowning achievement for our first-years was their year-end show. This group, most of whom had been admitted through an online process and had existed in a bubble for a year, were able to end the school year with a full-scale roving performance. Solidarity was the order of the day. It was a great moment of joy and courage.

An amazing year is coming to a close.

The French section, in collaboration with associate artist Xavier Huard, reintroduced the Stage Découverte. Youth aged 16 to 22 from all over Quebec, from all backgrounds, from all spheres, were invited to come and *experience* the School, first-hand, over a period of four days. Originally centred solely on acting, the Stage was redesigned to include all programs.

This has allowed us to broaden our network and address issues around inclusion. Several of this year's graduates had themselves participated in the Stage in 2015 and 2016 before enrolling at NTS. This event gives us a chance to showcase what we do, our openness, and the major changes currently underway at our excellent school.

From now on, the Stage will be an annual offering.

In the same vein, we have, like the English section, decided to bring in associate artists to better address the changes and overall well-being relating

From left to right: Lydia Sherknies (Interprétation, 2021) and Clémence Dufresne-Deslières (Interprétation, 2021) in the play *Les Ensevelies* by Caroline Bélisle (Écriture dramatique, 2020), directed by Sophie Cadieux. In a virtual exhibit in the spring of 2021. Photo: Maxime Côté



to issues of inclusion. After working with Xavier for the past two years, we have invited Soleil Launière and Tatiana Zinga Botao to take up the torch.

Soleil was our first Indigenous resident. She is well familiar with the School and the path it has forged. Tatiana, an author, director, and actor actively engaged in the theatrical milieu, also teaches at the School and is part of the jury for admissions to the *Interprétation* program. With the help of these two inspiring women, we are strengthening bonds with the students and reflecting on how to improve our teaching practices as well as our recruitment of new students. This collaboration is shaped through ongoing dialogue and takes into account everyone's needs. Everything is on the table, from the smallest detail to the most fundamental questions, and the changes we have implemented so far are already bringing about a new and exciting kind of synergy.

There is another beautiful partnership taking root within our walls, namely our association with *Les muses*. This performing arts centre is a school unique in its category, offering professional training in theatre, dance, and singing to artists living with disabilities (intellectual, autism spectrum disorder, physical or sensory limitations). As a result, last year we were able to welcome one of their students in our *Création* course. The exchange was rich and inspiring at all levels, and will be repeated in the future.

The NTS Artistic Leadership Residency ended its second year with great success. Letícia Tórgo completed two intensive internships with the Calgary company Making Treaty Seven, as well as being part of the French section's group. The residency's third year will begin in January 2022, in collaboration with the School's Monument-National.

An amazing year, truly.

And all this could never have happened without the resilience shown by our students. We were engaged in candid and open dialogue with them throughout

the entire year. They were also very charitable towards us and we are grateful for their maturity and generosity of spirit. Our School is one of partnership, mutual support, trust, and it is by working together that we have been able to come so far.

That said, our students are not immune to the problems brought on by these complex times. We have observed an increase in mental health issues. The fatigue that we are feeling, they experience it too. Differently. It's something that we simply cannot ignore. Being there for them, listening to what they have to say does help. We remain available at all times and our flexible approach helps us provide our best for everyone. But it is just a start. No one yet knows the full extent of the pandemic's impact on our lives, and within the academic realm, even less so. We are now just catching up, adjusting, and we need to be very vigilant in this regard. For this, we will need your help and support.

We are arriving to the finish line exhausted, to say the least. But it bears repeating, it has been an amazing year. We have worked hand in hand and, it must be said, this growing and evolving School is a unique workplace.

We have made theatre.
And theatre is a refuge.

I would like to thank Gideon for his support and dedication. Thank-you to the School's entire staff who have are supportive of our ideas and actions. Thanks as well to my colleagues in the English section and, of course, to my French section team: Catherine, Diane, Stéphane, Robert, Éric and all the teachers. And a special thank-you to all the students. What an inspiration you are!

I also would like to take this opportunity to express my gratitude to Marie Lavallée who is now nearing retirement after 35 years teaching voice and diction and whose contributions have left their mark on *Interpétation* program.

— NTS INDIGENOUS ADVISORY CIRCLE



JANI LAUZON



JIMMY BLAIS



ÉMILIE MONNET



REBECCA CUDDY



SYLVIA CLOUTIER



SOLEIL LAUNIÈRE



WAHSONTÍ:IO KIRBY

The Indigenous Advisory Circle was formed at the National Theatre School in the late spring of 2021. The National Theatre School of Canada Indigenous Advisory Circle gathers together to influence the pedagogical content of the school and braid together the French and English sections through Indigenous Artistic Practice. A diverse group of experienced Indigenous artists and NTS alumni, The Circle also provides awareness of cultural and artistic appreciation through Indigenous worldview. It is our hope that together with NTS we can strengthen the current core pedagogy and move forward together in our mutual pursuit of rich, well-rounded education in a good way.

The members of the Circle are Associate Director of the English Section Jani Lauzon, current Indigenous Artists in Residence Emilie Monnet and Rebecca Cuddy, Residency alumni Sylvia Cloutier, Jimmy Blais, Soleil Launière, and Acting Program graduate Wahsontí:io Kirby.


The NTS Advisory Circle has already accomplished much in a very short time. For the first time in the history of the organization we have been able to include a knowledge keeper, Kevin Deer, from the Kanien'kehá:ka Nation, to welcome the entire student body in both the French and English sections. This is a bringing together, a gathering

of community, as well as an opportunity to better appreciate the history of the area. We are interested in this being an annual event along with developing a deeper, long term relationship with Kevin Deer.

As mentioned, collaboration between the two sections is a top priority for the Advisory Circle. Both sections will experience workshops with Indigenous artists throughout the year. We are planning to bring in Inuit knowledge keeper Piita Irniq to speak about his traditional upbringing on the land, as well as this extensive knowledge of Inuit Drum Dance. The students will also experience a Pow Wow and Hoop Dance workshop with renowned Kanienkeha:ka dancer and choreographer Barbara Diabo.

In the new year, we have proposed a school-wide Appropriation vs. Appreciation Panel. This is an important discussion to have that frameworks the above-mentioned workshops that we are hoping to include in the school year. It is one thing to learn how to do West Coast Mask dance, or to sing specific Indigenous songs, but another to understand how these can then be used and utilized, if at all, in an individual practice. There is a difference between appropriation and appreciation.

The proposed panel would bring together renowned Indigenous scholars and artists. The fulsome discussion in this panel would hopefully be a guide



to how the individual students at the school can use the embodied practice shared to inform their own creative process without them replicating the content shared.

In addition to these larger scale projects, we are available to the NTS staff, faculty and students for consultation. We are in discussion about various smaller projects with Indigenous Arts Practitioners, and the Student's Association are eager to include the Circle in plans for their own projects.

In many Indigenous cultures, there is no separation between artistic practices and daily life. The NTS Indigenous Advisory Circle has been keenly accepted into the fabric of the school, and we are looking forward to creating meaningful learning opportunities for everyone at the NTS.

PROFESSIONNAL PROGRAMS

1. **Irdens Exantus** (Interprétation, 2021) in the play *Pulvérisés* by Franco-Romanian dramaturg **Alexandra Badea**, directed by **Alexia Bürger**. Photo: Maxime Côté



2. Two Création et production students disassembling the set of *Avant que les bêtes nous dévorent*, a play authored by **Mathieu Renaud** (Écriture dramatique, 2020) and produced by the graduating students in Interprétation, Création et production and Set and Costume Design, directed by **Félix-Antoine Boutin** (Interprétation, 2012). Photo: Maxime Côté



3. **Sahdia Cayermithe-Daceus** (Set and Costume Design 1) visiting the costume shop at the Monument-National. Photo: Maxime Côté



4. **Claire Macaulay** (Scénographie, 2021) and **William Aiden Sparks** (Production Design and Technical Arts, 2021) with teacher **Patrick Martel** and **Jani Lauzon**, associate Director of the English section, in a puppet-making class at a Monument-National workshop. Photo: Maxime Côté



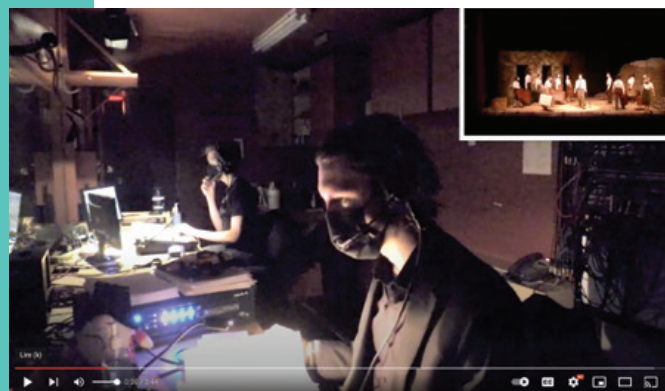
5. **Juliette Farcy** (Création et production, 2^e année) and **Tristan-Olivier Breiding** (Création et production, 2021) in rehearsal for *Avant que les bêtes nous dévorent*, by **Mathieu Renaud** (Écriture dramatique, 2020), dir. **Félix-Antoine Boutin** (Interprétation, 2012), April 2021. Photo: Laurence Plouffe



6. **Wanderson Santos** (Mise en scène, Brazil), **Robert Bellefeuille**, Director of the Mise en scène program, and an actress in a class.



➔ **Backstage at
a student show**



➔ **Live streaming *Indecent***
Interview with Caitlin Farley



➔ **Music, Voice and Speech
in Times of Pandemic**
with Laurel Thomson and Floyd Ricketts

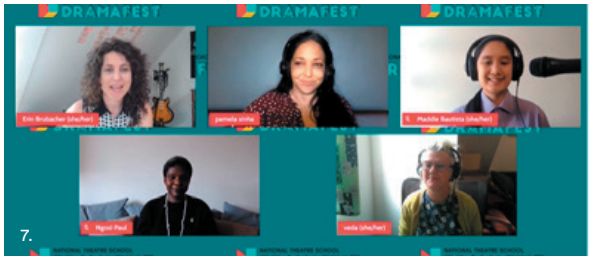


➔ **PEDAGOGY & CIRCULAR
COMMUNICATION**

Jani Lauzon, Associate Director
of the Acting Programdiplômée de l'ÉNT



DRAMAFEST AND COMMUNITY PROGRAMS



1, 2, et 3. Performances during DramaFest 2019.

4. Young students participating in DramaFest 2019.

5 et 6. Intergenerational Conversations Project 2021.

7. DramaFest 2021 was all done virtually.

8. A talk from DramaFest 2019.



A Midsummer's Night Dream by William Shakespeare, directed by Daniel Irving (Directing, 1996), and interpreted by second-year Acting students.
Photo: Maxime Côté

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A performance of *Indecent* (2020) by the graduating class of 2021, an exploration of Paula Vogel's play *Indecent*, directed by Mike Payette.

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Charlotte Raoutenfeld (*Interprétation, 2021*) and Irdens Exantus (*Interprétation, 2021*) in *Marguerite d'Anjou, reine d'Angleterre* by William Shakespeare, dir. Frédéric Dubois, set and accessories design by Margot Lacoste (Set and Costume Design, 2021), costume design, makeup, and hairstyles by Ange Blédja (Set and Costume Design, 2021), light conception by Tristan-Olivier Breiding (Création et production, 2021), February 2021. Photo: Maxime Côté

Cover page picture, from left to right: Irdens Exantus (*Interprétation, 2021*), Camille Giguère-Côté (*Interprétation, 2021*), and Émy Drolet (*Interprétation, 2021*) in a virtual exhibit (november 2020) of the plays *Pulvérisés* and *La terre tremble* by Alexandra Badea, directed by Alexia Bürger. Photo: Maxime Côté