



Press Release

National Theatre School of Canada announces Alisa Palmer will step down as Executive Artistic Director of the English section and Co-Director of the Acting and Residency programs in July 2024.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – Montreal, October 12, 2023 – Fanny Pagé, CEO, and the Board of Directors of the National Theatre School of Canada (NTS) announced today that, following 11 years of inspiring leadership, **Alisa Palmer** will leave her position as Executive Artistic Director and Co-Director of the Acting and Residency programs at the end of the school year in July 2024.

Alisa's collaboration with the National Theatre School of Canada spans several decades, starting when she first taught at the School at the age of 23, working primarily at the time with students from the English section. Over the course of the last eleven years, Alisa has served in various leadership roles in the section. In addition to her role as Artistic Director, Alisa has been Director of the Acting program since 2013, as well as Director of the Residency Programs for the past six years, and for four years she led the Directing Program. Following the creation of a new executive structure at NTS in 2021-2022, Alisa was named Executive Artistic Director of the English section while still co-directing the Acting Program and Residency Programs.

“Having had the privilege of working with Alisa, I can attest to her intelligence, tenacity, and unwavering dedication to the School, as well as the theatre community at large. Alisa is one of the country's most talented artists, playwrights and directors, as she has shown most recently in Stratford with *Hamlet-911* or the widely acclaimed show *Fall on Your Knees*, as well as the upcoming *Guilt (A Love Story)* which she will stage this winter. Her ambition and achievements are inspiring to both our student body and teaching community.” – **Fanny Pagé, CEO**

Throughout her career at the School, Alisa has demonstrated her ability to undertake ambitious projects and achieve remarkable results inside and outside the School. Her keen artistic vision, combined with her solid experience as a producer, enables her to successfully carry out complex initiatives. As an example, during the initial years following her arrival at NTS, Alisa successfully worked on the revitalization of the Acting Program and the reorganization of the English section to create greater cohesion and collaboration. Years later, this solid team and structure which Alisa built were invaluable as she guided the English section through the turbulent times of the pandemic and supported students during a vulnerable transition, including our most recent graduating class that has done most of their training under COVID protocols.

Alisa is also known for her insight and deep understanding of contemporary issues, particularly in the area of accessibility. Alisa founded several programs at the NTS, including the Indigenous Artist in Residence program and the Independent Study in Directing for IBPOC* directors, and she participated in the creation of the Artistic Leadership Residency. These programs provided new opportunities for mature artists from equity-owned communities to shape their own learning journey

in the English section and to have a lasting impact on the School. Alisa also introduced the model of Associate Artists to NTS, which created a community of artists from all artistic disciplines and a wide range of backgrounds and life experiences to provide mentorship and support to students and teaching artists alike.

“I have learned so much from my colleagues and above all from the students and artists-in-training that I have had the privilege of working with during my time at NTS. The past ten years have been a period of incredible creativity and inspiration. I am excited for the year to come and for all that lies ahead for our students, our grads and our community of artists both within the school and beyond”
– **Alisa Palmer**

NTS takes pride in the incomparable training it offers students, as well as the number of graduates from all programs in the English section who are integrated into the professional milieu across the country and beyond. These artists have an impact not only on the art itself, but on how to create with compassion, curiosity and courage, values which Alisa taught and imparted to them during the decade she spent at the National Theatre School.

Following this announcement, Fanny Pagé will now lead the work on developing the recruitment and transition plan, which should start later this fall and include various stakeholders from the theatre community across Canada.

About the National Theatre School of Canada

The National Theatre School of Canada (NTS) was established in Montreal in 1960 and is now considered the leading theatre training school in Canada. It provides incomparable training in French and English to actors, directors, playwrights, designers and production specialists to prepare them to work in professional theatre and delivers a broad range of community programs in order to make theatre more accessible to all Canadians. 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.

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