The Theatre Centre

WORLD PREMIERE

November 11-28, 2026

VERSUS

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QUIPTAKE THEATRE

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VERSUS

FEATURING **Adam Lazarus**





A World Premiere | Co-Produced by QuipTake Theatre, The Theatre Centre, and the National Arts Centre's National Creation Fund

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Versus is co-produced with the National Arts Centre's National Creation Fund which invests in compelling new creations in the performing arts and supports Canadian artists in achieving their boldest ambitions. | nac-cna.ca/en/creationfund

Versus was developed in Residency at The Theatre Centre. Residency is generously supported by BMO. | theatrecentre.org/residency

Versus presented a workshop presentation as part of the 2024 SummerWorks Performance Festival. | summerworks.ca

Versus was developed in association with The Creative School: Chrysalis at TMU. | torontomu.ca/chrysalis

Thank you
Versus was made possible thanks to support from The Theatre Centre, Canada Council for the Arts, Ontario Arts Council, Toronto Arts Council, the Government of Ontario, the Government of Canada and the National Creation Fund Critical Friends: Geoff Sobelle, Jecca Barry, Megan Leahy, and Lola Landekic.

NOTE FROM AISLINN ROSE

General & Artistic Director of The Theatre Centre

Adam and I were on one of our many frenzied "what is happening??" phone calls during the pandemic and he confessed to me that he was sure that if he could just find exactly the right words to articulate his thoughts, people would eventually understand everything he hoped to say. He asked me, "do you think that's possible?"... and I answered, "I don't think it's possible, but I do think it's a worthy endeavour".

I've worked with Adam for over 12 years, but I've known him and his work a lot longer than that. The first full-length show of his that I saw was the incredible *Wonderland* at SummerWorks in 2010 at the old Theatre Centre in the basement of the Great Hall. Adam and *Wonderland* held the audience in such a grip, that when one of The Theatre Centre's rats ran across the front of the stage, audience members murmured "how did he get the rat to do that??"

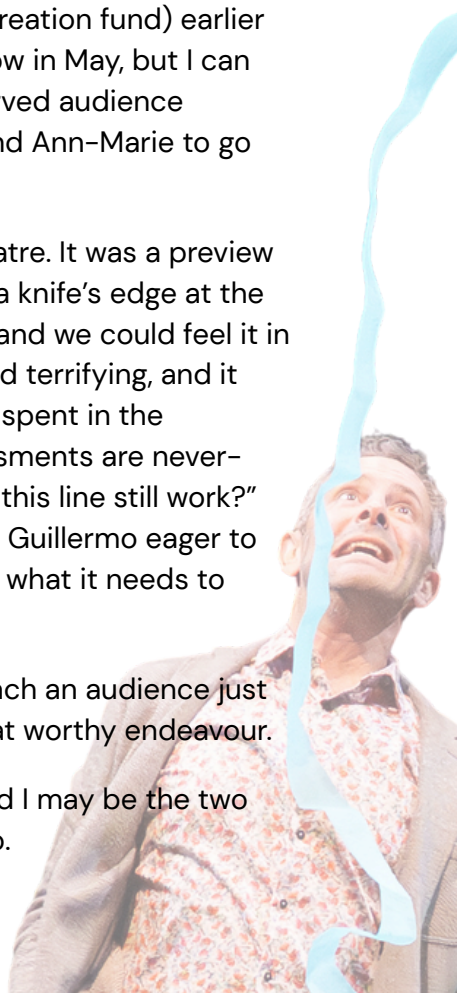
When Adam told me "I'm working on something new" in the midst of the pandemic, when we were all just trying to figure out "how to be", it was a no-brainer to invite the project into our Residency program. Residency is all about giving an artist with a big idea time. Time to be taken and mistakes to be made, and to test ideas in front of audiences and to take those learnings and ideas straight back into a room to remake them.

The *Versus* team has relished every opportunity that Residency affords. From in-process showings coming out of the pandemic, to a workshop presentation at SummerWorks in 2024, to seven weeks of intensive development (supported by the NAC's National Creation fund) earlier this year. We may have provided audiences with "sneak peeks" into the show in May, but I can assure you the team was peeking into your hearts and minds as they observed audience reactions to every beat of the work, notebooks in the hands of Guillermo and Ann-Marie to go straight back into the remaking of it all the following day.

It reminds me of one of the scariest nights I've ever experienced in the theatre. It was a preview for our co-production of Adam's show *Daughter*, a piece that skates along a knife's edge at the best of times. I would say on that particular evening the knife was slipping, and we could feel it in the house... the audience could revolt at any moment. It was exhilarating and terrifying, and it wasn't quite right. The entirety of the following day, before we opened, was spent in the rehearsal hall making those gentle but necessary tweaks... and those assessments are never-ending. Three cities and 40 performances later, Adam might ask me, "does this line still work?" I witnessed it again this week after the dress rehearsal, with Ann-Marie and Guillermo eager to get into notes. Adam pulled me aside and asked "is the final moment doing what it needs to do?" and I said "I guess we'll find out each night we do it, when it's real".

And while I still don't believe it's possible... to communicate perfectly, to reach an audience just so, Adam has never stopped trying, and I never want to stop supporting that worthy endeavour.

"Ever tried. Ever failed. No matter. Try again. Fail again. Fail better." Adam and I may be the two sides of that same Beckett coin. Maybe it's futile, but let's give it another go.



NOTE FROM SARAH CONN

Artistic Producer of the NAC's National Creation Fund

At the NAC National Creation Fund, we are dedicated to the alchemy of artistic creation. We make transformative investments in the development of ambitious new Canadian performances. Supported by Canadians from coast to coast to coast, we help some of our country's best artists bring their wildest creative dreams to life… And what better example of a wild dream than *Versus*!

For me, artistic creation is regenerative: something new is brought to life out of nothing. I think often about how artistic risk—so essential to creation, and yet inherently precarious—fits into that. When can artistic risk be sustaining, even sustainable? How do we sustain risk and hold it up, rather than flatten it through mitigation?
So often, the answer is the strength offered by community.

Versus is held by a truly incredible community: three co-producers, four funders, five co-creators and an incredible creative team, and now - audiences! This scale of work takes time, and we were honoured to partner with The Theatre Centre and Quiptake to make a seven-week workshop possible, and ensure the team had the time and space to fully explore, test, refine and implement ideas that they have always dreamt of.

Witnessing Adam, Alexis and their team nurture this dream over the past few years has been incredible. Their creative joy is exuberant, their passion is infectious, and their dedication to artistic risk and going all the way is a true gift.

And now, it's time for the party!

Sarah



NATIONAL CREATION FUND

Dream.
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The National Creation Fund, at Canada's National Arts Centre, invests in risk, innovation, and great ideas.

By supporting productions like ***Versus***, the Fund revels in the dynamism of Canadian creators.

The National Creation Fund is fuelled by National Arts Centre Foundation donors who believe in investing in Canadian creators.

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Canada is our stage. Le Canada en scène.

nac - cna. ca /creationfund

CREATIVE TEAM

Starring:
Adam Lazarus
Co-Creator, Co-Writer, Performer

Featuring the ensemble of:
Carson Kroeker, Brendan Rush, & **HannaH Sunley-Paisley**

Ann-Marie Kerr
Co-Creator, Co-Director

Gillian Gallow*
Co-Creator, Set, Prop & Costume Design

Michelle Ramsay*
Co-creator, Lighting Co-Designer

Curtis Whittaker
Technical Director

Michael Kras
Magic Direction & Design

Gabby Noga
Producer for The Theatre Centre

Fiona Jones
Stage Manager

Kate Chubbs
Apprentice Stage Manager

Hannah Dulong
Head of Wardrobe

Guillermo Verdecchia
Co-Creator, Co-Writer, Co-Director

Alexis Eastman
Co-Creator, Creative Producer

David Mesiha
Co-Creator, Sound Design
& Music Composition

Honey Hoseiny
Production Manager

Van Ward
Technical Director for
The Theatre Centre

Electra Pappa
Associate Set & Prop Design,
Assistant Costume Design

Za Hughes*
Lighting Co-Designer

ADC Associated Designers of Canada

*Indicated designers on this production are represented by the Associated Designers of Canada, IATSE Local ADC659.

Canadian Actors' EQUITY Association

The Theatre Centre engages professional Artists who are members of Canadian Actors' Equity Association under the terms of the Independent Theatre Agreement

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Publicist

The *Versus* Finale Musicians
Dermot O'Halloran
Harry Rowe
Ben Strumas
Nick Leiper
Noah Haddad

Versus is produced by permission of the Playwrights Adam Lazarus and Guillermo Verdecchia (with Marquis Literary (Colin Rivers) www.MQlit.ca).

Guillermo Verdecchia is a member of the Playwrights Guild of Canada.



Did you take a great pic before or after the show tonight?
Tag us. We *need* the dopamine.

Stay connected: @Versus_FeelAlive

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BMO

BMO is pleased to support **The Theatre Centre** and the artists that are captivating audiences with exciting, innovative, and entertaining productions.

We're proud to sponsor **the Residency Program**.

THE THEATRE CENTRE

The Theatre Centre is a nationally recognized live-arts incubator and community hub. Our mission is to offer a home for creative, cultural and social interactions to invent the future. We make work that spans disciplines and genres; work that pushes the boundaries of what is considered "art". Our programming and our role as a community space are inextricably linked. Art is not made in a silo: it is connected to the world around it.

theatrecentre.org | @thetheatrecentre | info@theatrecentre.org

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Theo Falkiner
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Adam Lazarus is an award-winning theatre creator, actor, director, and acting instructor whose work has been showcased nationally, in the United States, Australia and in Europe.

Adam brings a dark and comic sensibility to all of his work and is known for dynamic and implicating solo performances, including the international thought disrupter *Daughter*; the radical race oration *The Art of Building a Bunker* (co-written with Guillermo Verdecchia), the vicious bouffon love play *Wonderland*, and his latest anxiety odyssey *Versus*.

Currently: Adam is developing a reverse home invasion horror called *At the Speed of Business*, and his first novel of bouffon musings, titled *I'm Shit*.



Stay connected with Adam: @Versus_FeelAlive

COMPANY BIOS



Guillermo Verdecchia

Guillermo is a writer of drama and fiction as well as a director, dramaturge, translator, and actor. He is the recipient of a Governor-General's Award for Drama for his play *Fronteras Americanas* and a four-time winner of the Chalmers Canadian Play Award. His work, which includes *Feast*, the Governor-General's Award shortlisted *Noam Chomsky Lectures* (with Daniel Brooks), the Seattle Times' Footlight Award-winning *Adventures of Ali & Ali* (with Marcus Youssef and Camyar Chai), *A Line in the Sand* (with Marcus Youssef), *Our Heart Learns*, *bloom*, and *Another Country* has been recorded, anthologized, translated into Spanish and Italian, produced in Europe, Australia, and the US, and is studied in Latin America, Australia, Europe, and North America.



Ann-Marie Kerr

Ann-Marie is an award-winning theatre director, actor and teacher. Her work has been presented nationally and internationally. Select directing: *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* (Neptune Theatre); *The Trials of Maggie Pollack* (Blyth Festival); *Dear Rita* (Tweed Theatre Co.); *In Lieu of Flowers* (Neptune Theatre); *Frequencies* (Heist, Halifax); *#Iamthecheese* (Halifax Theatre for Young People/Eastern Front Theatre); *Concord Floral*, *7 Stories*, *Good Soul of Szechuan* (Fountain School of Performing Arts); *Secret Life of A Mother* (Theatre Centre, Crow's Theatre); *One Discordant Violin* (2b theatre company, Halifax, 59E59 St Theatre NYC, Montreal); *Bed and Breakfast* (Soulpepper Theatre Company);. Ann-Marie is a Siminovitch Prize finalist for Theatre Direction, NS Masterworks finalist and the former Artistic Associate of Magnetic North Theatre Festival.



Alexis Eastman

Alexis is a writer, creative producer, and collaborator in Toronto with a practice of supporting artists of all backgrounds through long-term performance creation. Alexis served as Producer at The Theatre Centre from 2018-2022 and currently works as Prod-ucer for Theatre Direct as well as freelance Creative Producer for several artists including: Emily Diana Ruth (filmmaker), and Adam Lazarus (theatre creator) and several other local geniuses. In her spare time she is working on her second novel. @alexis_leanna



Carson Kroeker

Carson Kroeker is Canadian actor born and raised in Winnipeg, Manitoba. A recent graduate of TMU's respected acting program, Carson is thrilled to be making his professional stage debut in Versus. Stage credits include Andrey Andréyevich Shipúchin in Anton Chekhov's *Seven Short Farces* and Martin Crimp's *Attempts on Her Life*. On screen, he can be seen as Colin in *A Kiss Before Christmas* (Hallmark/Jeff Beesley). Carson would like to thank his parents for their steadfast support and his sisters for continuing to keep his ego in check. @carson.kroeker



HannaH Sunley-Paisley

HannaH Sunley-Paisley grew up right here in Toronto. After playing basketball for the University of Ottawa, HannaH played four years of professional basketball in Germany and France. While there, she published her first novel, *Magic Required*. She has worked with Theatre of the Beat (*Jealousy*, *My Brother*), Theatre Gargantua (*Dissonant Species*), Youth Theatre Canada (*Where is Robin Hood?* – writer and co-director), and recently played Polonius in *Hamlet, Sweet Prince*, and is grateful to have the opportunity to learn and grow with *Versus*. Her newest Novel, *Full-Court Christmas*, is available for pre-order now and releases November 24th!



Brendan Rush

Brendan Rush is an actor and writer from Newmarket Ontario, and a graduate from the University of Toronto's CDTPS, and the National Theatre School of Canada's Acting program. While at NTS he had the joy of playing characters such as Demetrius in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Andrei in *Three Sisters*, and Just Joey in *Concord Floral*. As an artist, Brendan is interested in work which explores the intersection between grief and humour, and how such work can be used to mend and create community in the world today.

MORE COMPANY BIOS



Gillian Gallow

Gillian is a set and costume designer whose work has been seen around the world. Some of her recent projects include: *Mahabharata* (costumes, Why Not Theatre); *Major Barbara*, *Shadow of a Doubt*, *An Octoroon*, *The Russian Play* (set & costumes, Shaw); *Hadrian*, *Louis Riel* (costumes, COC); *Long Day's Journey into Night*, *The Physicists*, *The Three Musketeers* (costumes, Stratford); *A Doll's House* (set & costumes, Canadian Stage) and *Slave Play* (set, Canadian Stage). Gillian is currently designing costumes for Othello with the Stratford Festival, and the set for *Empire of Wild* with the Canadian Opera Company. Gillian is the 2021 Siminovitch Prize Laureate.



David Mesiha

David is a Toronto and Vancouver based, award-winning music composer, sound/video designer, interdisciplinary artist and co-artistic director of Theatre Conspiracy. His work has been presented at national and international venues and festivals including, England, Scotland, Mexico and Argentina. Shows include *Project (X)* by Leaky Heaven, *Foreign Radical* by Theatre Conspiracy, *YSHSH* by SpiderWebShow and Crow's Theatre's *Fifteen Dogs*. He is also music composer, sound designer and created audio implementation for *asses.masses* by Patrick Blenkarn and Milton Lim. David led the creation and created the immersive design for the critically acclaimed *Same Difference*, produced by Theatre Conspiracy. Most recently he won a Jessie Award for outstanding music composition for *SWIM*, (Theatre Conspiracy & Pandemic Theatre). Premiered at PuSh Festival 2025, the show also won a Jessie Award for innovation.



Michelle Ramsay

Michelle Ramsay is an award-winning lighting designer who has created designs for dance, theatre, and opera companies across Canada and around the world. Recent designs include: *King James Bible Play* (Stratford Festival/NAC); *cicadas* (NAC/Tarragon Theatre); *Copperbelt* (NAC/Soulpepper); *Piaf/Die-trich* (Grand Theatre); *Frozen* (Arts Club Theatre); *Waitress* (Arts Club Theatre & Grand Theatre/Theatre Aquarius); *Trident Moon* (Crows Theatre/NAC); *A Strange Loop* (Soulpepper/Crow's Theatre/Musical Stage Company/TOLive); *Snow in Midsummer* (Shaw Festival/NAC); *Women of the Fur Trade* (Globe Theatre and Stratford Festival); *The Tempest* (Theatre Rusticle). Michelle has received eight Dora Awards, the 2008 Pauline McGibbon Award, and was a finalist for the 2021 Siminovitch Prize. She is the Chair for Associated Designers of Canada and Vice-President for ADC659.



Za Hughes

Za Hughes (they/them) is a GTA-based designer. Past credits include: Lighting Designer: *Strife* (Tarragon Theatre), *The Piano Teacher* (Thousand Islands Playhouse), *A Wrinkle in Time* (StoryBook Theatre), *The Power of Women* (Capitol Theatre), *Doctor Faustus* (Apothecary Theatre/Dandelion Theatre), *Cabaret* (St.Lawrence College), Peter and the *Star Catcher* (StoryBook Theatre). Associate Lighting Designer: *A Strange Loop* (Soulpepper), *Newsies* (The Grand). Assistant Lighting Designer: *Prison Dancer* (Citadel Theatre), *As You Like It* (Theatre Calgary), *Little Shop of Horrors* (Capitol Theatre), *Made in Italy* (Theatre Calgary), *Beautiful: The Carol King Musical* (Arts Club).



Michael Kras

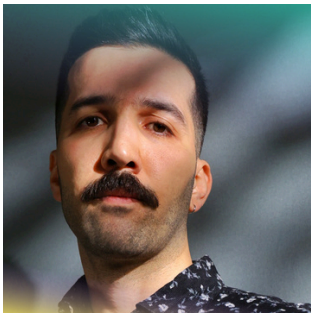
Michael is a Hamilton-based magic designer, playwright, and director. He has worked as the Magic & Illusion Lead for the North American Tour of *Harry Potter and the Cursed Child* (Bespoke Theatricals/Sonia Friedman) and was the resident magic director for the Canadian premiere (Mirvish). Other credits include *Clyde's* (Canadian Stage), *Richard III* (Caravan Farm Theatre), and *Franklin's Key* (Pig Iron Theatre). Michael's plays have been produced in Canada and internationally including the Voaden Prize winner *The Team* (ECT/Theatre Aquarius), *No Big Deal* (Roseneath Theatre), *The Start-Up* (Theatre Aquarius/Brave New Works), and others. He is currently under commission by Green Light Arts writing *Love Me Back*, a solo play with sleight of hand magic. Learn more at michaelkrasworks.com.



Fiona Jones

Selected credits: *After The Rain* (NAC/Musical Stage); *Pain! The Musical* (work-shop); *Dion A Rock Opera* (Coal Mine Theatre); *The Last Epistle of Tightrope Time*, *The Hooves Belonged to the Deer*, *An Acre of Time*, *The Road to Hell*, *one word*, *The Retreat* (Tarragon Theatre); *The Man That Got Away* (Buddies in Bad Times); *Bentboy* (YPT); *Crow Hill*, *Bombers*, *The Hero of Hunter Street*, *The Bad Luck Bank Robbers*, *Wounded Soldiers*, (4th Line Theatre); *What A Young Wife Ought To Know* (2b Theatre /GCTC/Crow's Theatre); *Disgraced* (Mirvish/ Hope In Hell Theatre / Citadel Theatre); *Life, Death And The Blues*, *Such Creatures* (Theatre Passe Muraille); *Trudeau Stories* (Long Black Car); *Trout Stanley*, *Cold Meat Party*, *Tiger of Malaya*, *Belle* (Factory Theatre).

EVEN MORE COMPANY BIOS



Honey Hoseiny

Honey Hoseiny is a Toronto-based interdisciplinary artist, theatre director, designer, actor, puppeteer, and production professional originally from Iran. His practice spans theatre, immersive performance, puppetry, interactive installation, and multimedia design. Since moving to Canada in 2023, he has collaborated with companies including Outside the March, Tarragon Theatre Crow's Theatre, Modern Time Stage Company, Nowadays Theatre, Guild Festival Theatre, and The Theatre Centre, etc. Honey received the 2025 Toronto Arts Foundation Newcomer Artist Award. He is also co-founder of Simiya Group, exploring the intersection of performance, visual art, technology, and cultural storytelling.



Curtis Whittaker

Curtis Whittaker is a technical director, scenic carpenter, sound designer, musician, and visual artist who splits their time between Toronto and Nova Scotia. Selected credits include Technical director: Opera Atelier (2023 to 2026) and Festival of Dance Annapolis Royal (FODAR) 2021-present. Also: Sarah Porter Productions, *RiserX*, Theatre Gargan-tua, and Rochester Opera House. Head scenic carpenter credits: Factory Theatre (2022 to present); Theatre Passe Muraille, Tapestry Opera, Lower Ossington Theatre, Fall for Dance North. Designer and head of audio credits: Wychwood Theatre; Lower Ossington Theatre; *Travis Knights: The Mars Project*; Fujiwara Dance Productions (projections & audio); Leon Arts: Doubles. Head carpenter credits: Art Shelter and Dome, Frog in Hand.



Kate Chubbs

Kate is an emerging stage manager based in Toronto. Select credits include *Reimu* (Hibiki Project), *The Black Spider*, *Alice in Wonderland* (CCOC), *& Juliet* (Mirvish), *The Welkin* (Soulpepper), as well as projects with the Musical Stage Company, Outside Looking In, SummerWorks, and Pride Toronto. Kate holds a BFA in Performance Production from Toronto Metropolitan University.



Electra Pappa

Selected Theatre: *La Cenerentola* | Set Designer (West Road Concert Hall, UK); *The Crucible* | Set Designer (Theatre im Delphi, Germany); *The Quest* | Assistant Set & Costume Designer (Arcola Theatre, UK).

Selected Film/TV: *Karateka* | Set Dec Assistant (Artsmedia), *Marty Supreme* | Set Designer (A24), *Back in Action* | Art Dept Assist-ant (Netflix) , *Invasion S2* | Set Designer (Apple TV+), *Half Bad* | Jr Set Designer (Netflix), *Masters of the Air* | Art Dept Assistant (Apple TV+).



Hannah DuLong

Hannah Marie Dulong is a Toronto based wardrobe professional and costume designer. Selected design credits include, *The Bacchae* (TMU), *The Mine* (Doormouse Productions), *Taranta* (Frog In Hand) *Tour* (Frog In Hand) *Sweeney Todd the Demon Barber of Fleet Street* (Horror Show Productions), *Icarus is Falling* (Sheep's Clothing Theatre) *Pippin* (Bowtie Productions) and working as the Assistant Head of Wardrobe at the TMU School Of Performance. Follow along with her work @hannah_marie_art



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THE THEATRE CENTRE

Dec 4 Friday:	5-9pm
Dec 5 Saturday*:	11am-6pm
Dec 6 Sunday**:	11am-6pm

SPECIAL THANKS

Versus started many years ago. Thanks to these folks for their creative contribution, collaboration, and commiseration along the way:

Claire and Kirk Dunn, Andrew Chown, Kate Alton, Pia Bouman, Michaela Washburn, Tom Arthur Davis, liza paul , Jiv Parasram, Why Not Theatre, Melissa D'Agostino, Colin Doyle, Phil Nozuka, Shôn Dale-Jones, Adrian Shepherd Gawinski, Shannon Currie, Aislinn Rose, Tania Harrison, Tarek Iskander, Jeff Clement, Nicole Kleiman, Bonnie Kim, Geoff Sobelle, Navid Amini, Naomi Campbell, Jecca Barry & Jen Kidwell.

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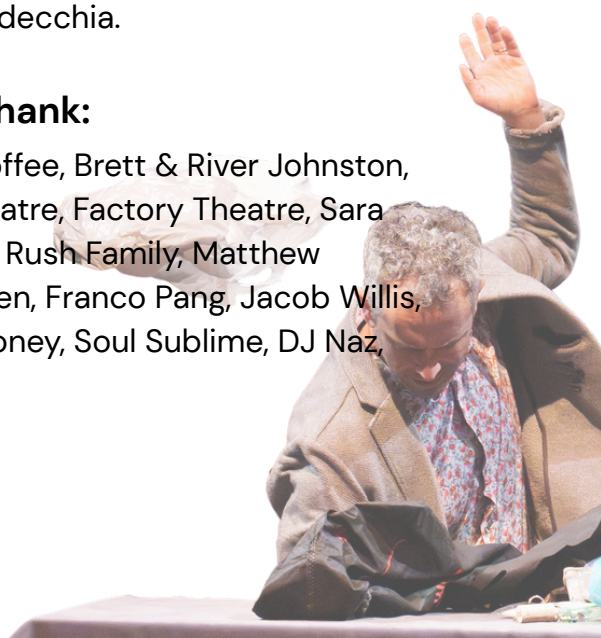
In June 2024 we held a fundraiser for _Versus_ at The Theatre Centre. 16 artists donated their brilliance and performed a piece of _Daughter_. Eternal thanks to:

Maev Beaty, Amanda Cordner, Lisa Karen Cox, Melissa D'Agostino, Colin Doyle, Brendan Healy, Graham Isador, Tanja Jacobs, Chase Jeffels, Arjun Kalra, Ann-Marie Kerr, Craig Lauzon, Jiv Parasram, liza paul, Aislinn Rose & Guillermo Verdecchia.

The _Versus: World Premiere_ team would like to thank:

Anthony Black, Claire & Kirk Dunn, Mary Spyrakis, Indoor Coffee, Brett & River Johnston, Lori Ingram, Jay Hines, Crow's Theatre, Evan Harkai, TYT Theatre, Factory Theatre, Sara Ahmadieh, Chynah Philadelphia, Rainbow Kester, The entire Rush Family, Matthew Kroeker, Colleen Kroeker, Estella Haensel, Annasofie Jakobsen, Franco Pang, Jacob Willis, Irene Ly, Nicholas Eddie, Fabien Marcil, Lucy Coren, Lego Money, Soul Sublime, DJ Naz, Emily Pickering, & Freida Wang.



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