

MEDIA RELEASE

CITADEL THEATRE COMMITS TO NEW PLAY DEVELOPMENT THROUGH INNOVATIVE PROGRAM

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(EDMONTON) The Citadel Theatre is pleased to announce the creation of **THE LAB**, an annual, dedicated, season-long commitment to new play development. Through this program, four playwrights will receive support over the course of a season to explore the writing and creation of a new work suitable for the Citadel stages. Each year will have a different theme for exploration – in 2017/18 this theme is Community and this year's title is **Block Party**.

To launch this program, and to emphasize the focus on community, all four of the playwrights chosen for The Lab 2017/18 are Edmontonians. The four playwrights involved in this inaugural season are **Minister Faust** (*Coyote Kings; The Alchemist of Kush*), **Marty Chan** (*Mom, Dad - I'm Living with a White Girl; The Forbidden Phoenix*), **Belinda Cornish** (*Little Elephants; Category E*), and **Kenneth T. Williams** (*Café Daughter; Thunderstick*). The Lab is run by the Citadel's Associate Artistic Director, Rachel Peake, who is the head of new play development.

Chan will be exploring our budding relationship with artificial intelligence and the community, or the isolation which that new technology introduces. Williams is exploring how a language grows and rejuvenates after colonization through a family-friendly adventure story that uses elements of clown and fantasy. Cornish will delve into a theatrical adaptation of the novel *The Garneau Block* by celebrated Edmonton novelist **Todd Babiak** (*Choke Hold; Toby: A Man*). Minister Faust is creating an immersive, augmented reality drama, which, like a video game, allows "players" to follow branching story directions, from the Leo Desroches murder mysteries by Edmonton's acclaimed **Wayne Arthurson** (*Fall from Grace; A Killing Winter*).

The Lab forms part of the Citadel's new approach to play development, **Accelerator**. Accelerator encourages large-vision projects, work that challenges the traditional actor-audience relationship, and dynamic collisions of different artistic mediums. The Citadel is actively commissioning digital and multi-platform stories, including narrative podcasts, interactive online projects, and projects that exist simultaneously in both digital and live space. Our work is inclusive, reflecting the diversity of our communities and featuring a breadth of new stories, voices, and perspectives. Our vision is international, while retaining an emphasis on Edmonton-based artists and stories - placing them in the international spotlight.

For more information on The Lab or on new play development at the Citadel, visit our website at:

<http://www.citadeltheatre.com/artists-learning/play-development>

The Citadel Theatre and Academy is a not-for-profit organization that relies on the generous support of donors, sponsors, and foundation and government funders.