

DEAFY

BY CHRIS DODD



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WE WISH TO ACKNOWLEDGE that the land on which we gather is Treaty No. 6 territory and a traditional meeting ground and home of the First Nations, including both the treaty signatories – Cree, Saulteaux, Nakota Sioux, Stony and Cree-Iroquois – as well as other Indigenous peoples, such as the Blackfoot and Métis, who occupy this land. We extend our appreciation for the opportunity to live, create and perform on this territory.

Nikistêyhtamâkânân oma askîwihtâwin ita
kâ mâwasakôyâhk Nikotwâsik Kâ akihtêk
omâmawôpayônôwâw Nistam Îyinôwak,
nânapo ôkih tipahamawâkan tahkikwanênkêwak-
Nêhîyawak, Nahkawînôwak, Opwâsîmowak, Asinî
Pwâtak êkwah Nêhîyaw Paskosikanak-êkwah
kotakak Îyinôwak, tâpiskôc Kaskitêwayasitak êkwah
Âpihtwâyak, kâkîh kikîwîhkêcik otah. Nitâniskê
nanâskôtênân tawâw ôtah êh ayâyâhk tita wîci
pimâtisîhtamâhk, tita osîhcikêyâhk êkwah tita
nôkohtihwêyâhk otah askîwihtâwinihk.

The Citadel engages, under the terms of the Canadian Theatre Agreement, professional artists who are members of the Canadian Actors' Equity Association. Production personnel for the Citadel Theatre are members of the International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees (I.A.T.S.E.)

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





DEAFY

By **CHRIS DODD**

CAST

Chris Dodd

Nathan Jesper

ASL INTERPRETERS

Pam Brenneis, Diane DeAndrade, Carla Dupras, Helen McLeod, Shelly Nafshi, Alicia Ponciano, and Jenni Stevens

CREATIVE TEAM

Ashley Wright

Director

Sarah Karpyskin

Production Designer

Dave Clarke

Sound Designer

Ainsley Hillyard

Movement Coach, Choreographer

Madison Henry

Stage Manager (Jan 10 - 28, 2023)

Amanda Goldberg

Stage Manager (Jan 29 - Feb 12, 2023)

Erin Hayes

Surtitlist

Amorena Bartlett

ASL Coach, Deaf Consultant

Joshua Meredith

Vocal Coach

VENUE Rice Theatre

AGE RECOMMENDATION 14+

RUN TIME Approximately 60 minutes

INTERMISSION No Intermission

SYNOPSIS Deaf public speaker, Nathan Jesper, has arrived to give a talk at his venue, although desperately late. As his speech begins, his tone and the stories he tells begin to change. *Deafy* is a tragicomedy, combining spoken words, ASL and captions. Nathan recounts tales in his life of navigating relationships with friends and everyday situations dealing with deafness and, ultimately, what it means to belong.

FUNDING

The Citadel Theatre gratefully acknowledges the support of Canada Council for the Arts (Public Outreach), Government of Canada (Re-engaging Audiences Fund for Professional Arts Presentation Organizations), and Alberta Foundation for the Arts (Organization Activation Projects) for our production of *Deafy* and other accessible performance opportunities in 2022-2024.

WELCOME TO *DEAFY!*

Our Highwire programming is the Citadel's opportunity to showcase incredible work by local artists and theatre companies. Highwire is a place to explore groundbreaking scripts and innovative theatrical productions. *Deafy* by Chris Dodd is a thrilling production that blends ASL, the spoken word, and captions, to weave a tragicomedy that deals with deafness, community, and what it really means to belong.

We're proud to welcome Chris to the Citadel and to introduce you to his work. Chris is a fantastic Edmonton-based Deaf performing artist, playwright and accessibility advocate. He is also the founder and artistic director of SOUND OFF, Canada's national theatre festival dedicated to

the Deaf performing arts, and a member of the Citadel's Playwright's Lab.

Thanks so much for joining us for this production. We hope you'll join us in April for our next Highwire production, *Punctuate! Theatre's First Métis Man of Odesa*, and for all of the other exciting programming this season!

Enjoy the show!



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sarah Pocklington'.

Sarah Pocklington
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Daryl Cloran'.

Daryl Cloran
ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

PLAYWRIGHT'S NOTES

BY CHRIS DODD

Deafy has been a labor of love for almost six years. I started this play at the encouragement of Canadian playwright Vern Thiessen, who was the artistic director of Workshop West Playwrights' Theatre at the time. It was slowly crafted together through a series of readings and workshops, accumulating with its first experimental production at Toronto's SummerWorks Performance Festival in 2019. The play was further honed through my long-term artistic partnership with the director, Ashley Wright, whom I have been co-creating with for over twenty years. Although the development period lasted years, this play is actually decades in the making. It embodies a lifetime of experiences

as a Deaf person, reflecting upon past moments of both humor and adversity. However, to be perfectly clear, Nathan Jesper, the play's protagonist, is not me. Rather he is a construct, filtering through my own experiences, Deaf friends' experiences and the common, universal challenges that Deaf people face everyday. The play also offers a rare opportunity for an authentic worldview through the perspective of a Deaf writer. Too often in plays, TV and movies, Deaf stories are almost always crafted by hearing writers. A perfect example of this is the recent Academy Award winning movie, CODA, based on the struggles of a Deaf family's fishing business. In spite of the recognition for the film's Deaf actors, the story itself was written by a hearing person. That's not to say that there aren't talented Deaf writers out there, as there are many. Rather, there are less opportunities and recognition afforded to Deaf writers compared to our hearing counterparts. Fortunately, this is changing within Canada's theatre's landscape and more companies are now recognizing the importance of diversity of the stories told on their stages and the awareness of the voices who have been traditionally neglected. The fact that this play has landed at the Citadel is a monumental event in itself. This production marks the first time in the Citadel's 58-year history that a play has been produced by a Deaf playwright. With hope, this production is just the beginning. Thank you for coming to share this experience with me and I hope you will leave with just a bit of an understanding of what it is like to be a "deafy".

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CHRIS DODD

NATHAN JESPER,
PLAYWRIGHT

Chris is an award-winning Deaf actor, playwright and consultant. He is pleased to again be returning to the Citadel having first appeared in *Prom Night of the Living Dead* (Citadel Theatre). Other notable performances include *Ultrasound* (Theatre Passe Muraille), *Queen Seraphina and the Land of Vertebraat* (Sum Theatre) and *Silent Words* (Tarragon Theatre). Chris is the founder and artistic director of SOUND OFF, Canada's national Deaf performance festival which takes place annually in Edmonton. He holds a degree in drama from the University of Alberta.

Special thanks to Vern Thiessen, Milane Pridmore-Franz, Heather Inglis and Workshop West Playwrights' Theatre, Darrin Hagen, Amorena Bartlett, Roxanne Cote.



**ASHLEY
WRIGHT**
DIRECTOR

SELECTED ACTING - *ROOM* (Grand/Mirvish); *Cost of Living, Sweat* (Arts Club/Citadel); *Shakespeare in Love, Of Mice and Men* (Citadel/RMTC); *Merry Wives of Windsor, Romeo and Juliet* (Bard on the Beach); *Omnium Gatherum, As You Like It, Fernando Krapp* (Canadian Stage); *Trials of Ezra Pound* (Stratford Festival); *The Fall, Red Priest, Black Rider, Slavs* (Tarragon Theatre); *Les Miserables* (Mirvish); *True Love Lies* (Factory Theatre). SELECTED DIRECTING *Silent Words, Deafy* (Follow the Signs Theatre); *Twelfth Night* (Studio Theatre).



SARAH KARPYSHIN

PRODUCTION
DESIGNER

Sarah is a Theatre Design Bachelor graduate from the University of Alberta. She has been freelancing nationally as a theatre designer for 8 years and she is currently working as the Head of Props at the Citadel and taking time to focus on her own artistic practice. Sarah enjoys working with collaborative and experimental artists and continues to sculpt and push the boundaries of theatre and artistic performance. This is the fourth production of *Deafy* that Sarah is a part of and she is excited to see it come alive.



**DAVE
CLARKE**
SOUND
DESIGNER

Dave has created sound and music for theatre, film, dance, and multi-media for three decades. Previous designs for the Citadel Theatre include *Network*, *The Tempest*, *Cost of Living*, *A Brimful of Asha*, and *Mary's Wedding: A Métis Love Story*. Other recent designs include *Enough* (Northern Light Theatre); *Bloomsday* (Shadow Theatre); *Hold These Truths* (University of Alberta); *Tune To A* (Bad Hats Theatre). Dave is a CODA (child of deaf adults). A Canadian tour is planned for his musical *Songs My Mother Never Sung Me*, performed in sung English and American Sign Language.



AINSLEY HILLYARD

MOVEMENT COACH,
CHOREOGRAPHER

Ainsley Hillyard is an Amiskwacîwâskahikan (Edmonton)-based artist of settler descent. She is a choreographer, performer and educator who works in contemporary dance and theatre. Select choreography credits include: *Mr. Burns: A post electric play* (You are Here theatre and Blarney Productions) Sterling nomination for Outstanding Choreography; *Cardiac Shadow* (Good Women Dance Collective and Northern Light Theatre) Sterling Award for Outstanding Choreography; assistant choreographer for *Hadestown* and *Peter Pan Goes Wrong* (Citadel Theatre); and Movement Director for *Jane Eyre* by Erin Shields (Citadel Theatre), Choreographer for *Almost a Full Moon* (Citadel Theatre).



MADISON HENRY

STAGE
MANAGER

(JAN 10 - 28, 2023)

Maddy (she/her) is thrilled to be back in Edmonton amongst the incredible team here at The Citadel. Many thanks to Daryl, Cheryl, Chris, and Ashley for having her be a part of this project. Select credits include: *Network*, *Jane Eyre* (Citadel Theatre); *Hey Viola!* (The Charlottetown Festival); *The Wizard of Oz*, *Chelsea Hotel*, *The Sound of Music*, *A Christmas Carol*, (Western Canada Theatre); *The New Canadian Curling Club*, *The Buddy Holly Story* (Thousand Islands Playhouse); *Silent Light* (Banff Centre).



AMANDA GOLDBERG

STAGE
MANAGER

(JAN 29 - FEB 12, 2023)

Amanda Goldberg (she/her/elle) is an artist from Tiohtià:ke/Montreal. She works as a director, assistant director, dramaturg and stage manager in both English and French theatres. She's an honours graduate from the University of Alberta's MFA Directing program, Concordia University's Theatre and Development program and Dawson College's Professional Theatre program. Recent directing credits include: *Brontë*, *Phaedra's Love* and *Belleville* (University of Alberta); *Yerma* (Concordia University); *City Boy* (Mainline Theatre); and three-time META nominated production, *Smackhead* (We Are One). Amanda is currently based in Amiskwacîwâskahikan/Edmonton working as Shadow Theatre's Artistic Director Fellow.



**ERIN
HAYES**
SURTITLIST

Erin is thrilled to be back at the Citadel Theatre this season. She is a graduate of the BFA Technical Theatre Stage Management program at the University of Alberta and has been herding cats professionally since 2017. Most recently, she has been working backstage as a Dresser, and is now ready to take on the title of Surtitlist! Previous Credits Include: *The Candidate/The Party*, *The Color Purple*, *9 to 5: The Musical*, *Clue*, *Network*, *A Christmas Carol* (Citadel Theatre); *The Mountaintop* (Shadow Theatre) and *Reading the Signs* (GeriActors Theatre)



AMORENA BARTLETT

ASL COACH,
DEAF CONSULTANT

Amorena Bartlett (she/her) is a queer Deaf consultant and ASL coach from Amiskwaciy Waskahikan, colonially known as Edmonton. Some productions she has been involved with include *Songs My Mother Never Sung Me* (Concrete Theatre); *Glass Washrooms* (NIUBOI, Chinook Series); *Ren & the Wake* (Catch The Keys Productions), to name a few. She is grateful for opportunities to have worked with amazing individuals and would like to thank those that have put their trust in her to provide rewarding and inclusive theatrical experiences for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing community.



JOSHUA MEREDITH

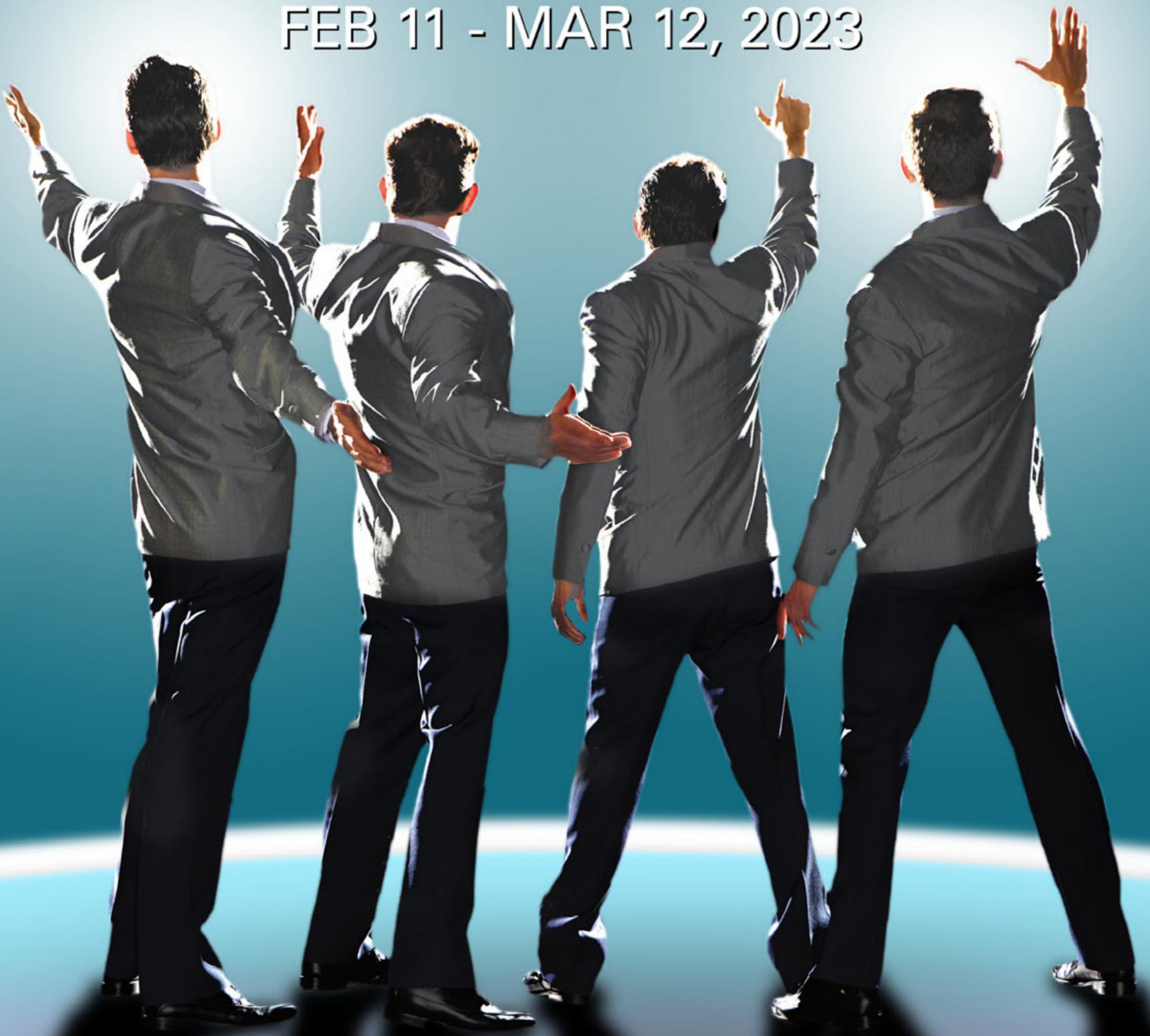
VOCAL
COACH

Josh is a freelance artist and educator with a specialism in Voice Pedagogy. Originally from Hull, North England, he trained as an actor at the Liverpool Institute for Performing Arts, and then as a teacher of voice at the University of Alberta. Select Voice & Dialect Coaching credits: *Ubu Roi, She Kills Monsters, Eclipse, Dracula, Iphigenia 2.0, Belleville, The Glass Menagerie, People in Cages, Lipstick, Di and Viv and Rose* (University of Alberta); *Parts and Labour* (Fieldworks Stories); *Butcher* (Shattered Glass Theatre); *The Night Season* (East Riding Theatre).

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celebrate all voices, all bodies, and all experiences.

This is a living statement that has been crafted by Citadel Theatre's Equity, Diversity & Inclusion Committee. If you have any questions, please contact:

EDICOMMITTEE@CITADELTHEATRE.COM

VISION STATEMENT

The Citadel Theatre believes in being Inclusive, Innovative, and International in our programming and practices

INCLUSIVE We celebrate, welcome and share stories with the many different communities that make up Edmonton. Our stages come alive with different voices and cultures. We strive to make our productions and our facilities inclusive and accessible; we believe the Citadel is a place where everyone belongs.

INNOVATIVE Our programming will celebrate new work, new performance styles and productions that experiment with dramatic form. We will develop large-scale new work by Edmontonian, Canadian and international playwrights. We will create collisions between different art forms, and present work that includes dance, music and digital storytelling.

INTERNATIONAL We will present and collaborate with exciting theatre-makers from around the world, as well as taking the fantastic work of the Citadel to audiences everywhere.

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brought professional theatre to Edmonton

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built the Citadel Theatre

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continues to inspire the theatre we create today

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On the Citadel's 30th Anniversary, a gift was made by the Company of Harry Hole, James F. Hole, Ralph K. Hole and Robert W. Hole on behalf of the Hole family — in honour of their late father, Henry Hole.

The Citadel Theatre is proud to honour Henry Hole's integrity, compassion and leadership in the dedication of this complex to his memory.

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THANK YOU! We extend our heartfelt thanks to all our donors, whose generosity plays a crucial role in ensuring our community has the opportunity to experience the joy of performing arts. All of our donors have a profound and lasting impact on the quality, accessibility, and relevance of the Citadel's productions, facility, and educational offerings.

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HEARING LOOP

The Shoctor Theatre
is now equipped with a cutting-
edge Hearing Loop system! This is a
momentous milestone in our ongoing
work towards universal accessibility.

This project was made possible with a significant contribution from the Shoctor Family, community donations, and the support of Hearing Loops Canada. Thank you to our generous partners who help make the Citadel a place where everyone can belong!