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Introducing the New FACTORY THEATRE WITH GRIT

Grit is a word that has long been associated with Factory.

From its founding in 1970 with a commitment to Canadian stories; to the Heritage building that now houses the 45-year old company; Factory’s vision has always conveyed indomitable courage and resolve; toughness; tenaciousness; and strength of character. Factory has grit.

“Theatre with grit is about tackling work with uncomfortable truths; about developing and producing art fuelled and inspired by outrage at social injustice and inequity; and about recognizing and nurturing artists who are proud of their heritage and possess authentic theatrical voices,” says newly appointed Artistic Director, Nina Lee Aquino.

Nina and the artistic team of Associate Artistic Director Nigel Shawn Williams and Artistic Producer Jonathan Heppner, will be ferocious in championing relevant and powerful Canadian stories that push the boundaries of theatrical practice and form -- theatre with grit. Factory will continue to be a powerful force in the development of diversity on Canadian stages, and will continue to ask the question, in all its manifestations, “What is Canada?”

“The works I am attracted to, and choose to take on, are never ‘easy’ or ‘safe’ work,” explains Aquino. “Theatre created by culturally diverse artists is often dangerous, angry, and highly politicized. My artistic approach to these works has always been with an open heart and mind, with active ears and a staunch belief in, and passion for, telling the difficult story, the important story.”

New Artistic Director

An award-winning director, dramaturge, playwright and actor, Nina Lee Aquino considers Factory her artistic birthplace. The former Artistic Director, and founding member, of fu-GEN Asian Canadian Theatre Company and Cahoots Theatre Company began her relationship with Factory as a student under the mentorship of then-company dramaturge Brian Quirt. It was the support of Factory that enabled Nina to establish fu-GEN as a resident company at Factory. Under the tutelage of Factory co-founder Ken Gass, Nina became Artistic Producer of the CrossCurrents Festival, Factory’s new play development festival for playwrights of colour, and then served as Factory’s Associate Artistic
Director, thus cementing her ties to the company. Nina is the youngest woman of colour artistic director of a ‘venued’ theatre company in Canada.

New work development has always been at the heart of Factory’s artistic vision. Over the years, through Factory’s senior creation group, Natural Resources, the company has identified many gifted and multifaceted creators and provided them with a developmental path for their long-term evolution as artists. The newest addition to this programme is The Foundry, an emerging creators group, which will benefit creators in the early stages of their career and assists them through the process of developing an idea into a draft. The revamped Factory Wired is now a series of workshop readings, programmed throughout the season, of plays in various stages of development.

New Actor-Training and Mentorship Program

The current season also launched Factory’s first ever actor-training and mentorship program, Factory Mechanicals. Conceived and led by Associate Artistic Director Nigel Shawn Williams, this unique ten-month program will train actors specifically in the area of new play development with the aim of strengthening their workshop and reading skills. The ten inaugural participants were invited after being seen at Factory’s general auditions last season.

Factory’s role is to boldly bring new Canadian voices to the stage. Some voices are bound to be unfamiliar and challenging but the goal is for the expression of that voice to give the audience pause for reflective questions and critical thinking. Theatre as an authentic challenge – theatre with grit.

“We also want to provide an artistic testing ground where our typical notions of what a play is can be challenged and redefined, and where artists can practice, explore and experiment with theatrical forms and creation methods that are just as diverse and complex as the artists themselves,” continued Aquino. “We will continue to look at contemporary Canada, with all our rich and complex social, political, economic and cultural landscapes, through various artistic lenses; dramatizing Canadian life as it is experienced today. I would like these journeys to be at the very heart of every Factory creation.”

New Depth Across the Team

Factory is setting out on its new course with an almost entirely new crew. The current staff structure is the artistic team of Artistic Director Nina Lee Aquino, Associate Artistic Director Nigel Shawn Williams and Artistic Producer Jonathan Heppner. The revitalized administrative staff includes Marketing & Audience Development Manager Renna Reddie, Development & Partnerships Manager Britteny Cathcart, Box Office Manager Edna Snyder, Front of House & Events Manager Ellen Hurley, and New Play Development Coordinator Matt McGeachy. A new Business Manager is to be announced. The production team includes Production Manager Erin Birkenbergs and Technical Directors Jamie Monteiro and Bryan Eaton.

The 45th anniversary continues with four more productions in 2015. TWISTED is a beautifully brutal Regent Park redo of Oliver Twist, co-written by Charlotte Corbeil-Coleman and Joseph Jomo Pierre and directed by Factory’s Nigel Shawn Williams.

Jessie Award-winning THE UNPLUGGING, an aboriginal, post-apocalyptic, feminist manifesto by Yvette Nolan, marks the directorial debut of Nina Lee Aquino as Factory’s Artistic Director, and Factory’s first collaboration with Native Earth Performing Arts.
Factory’s Clowns-in-Residence, Morro and Jasp will premiere their ninth production, **MORRO AND JASP: 9-5** in the Studio Theatre. Morro and Jasp are ready to enter the workforce . . . if only someone would hire them.

Factory hosts the triumphant return of the Ronnie Burkett Theatre of Marionettes with **THE DAISY THEATRE**. Manipulating and voicing his puppets through musical numbers, impromptu monologues, and audience participation, this is **Ronnie Burkett** unleashed, unscripted and uncensored.

Welcome to the new Factory. Theatre with grit.

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Factory 45th Anniversary Season
Continuing in 2015

**TWISTED**
Written by Charlotte Corbeil-Coleman and Joseph Jomo Pierre
Factory Theatre down with bcurrent
January 31 – February 22, 2015

**THE UNPLUGGING**
Written by Yvette Nolan
A Factory Theatre and Native Earth Performing Arts Partnership
March 14 – April 5, 2015

**MORRO AND JASP: 9-5**
Created by Morro and Jasp
Factory Theatre in conspiracy with U.N.I.T. Productions
May 12-31, 2015

**THE DAISY THEATRE**
Created by Ronnie Burkett
Special Guest Company: Ronnie Burkett Theatre of Marionettes
March 18 – April 5, 2015

To purchase tickets or packages with special subscriber events and benefits, please call the box office at 416.504.9971, reserve online at [www.factorytheatre.ca](http://www.factorytheatre.ca) or visit the box office in person at 125 Bathurst Street at Adelaide Street
For more information call 416.504.9971 or visit [www.factorytheatre.ca](http://www.factorytheatre.ca)

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