

SOULPEPPER'S 2022 SEASON
NEW SEASON. NEW IDEAS. WELCOME BACK.
CELEBRATE 25 YEARS WITH SOULPEPPER

Toronto, ON – November 16, 2021: The staff and artists of **Soulpepper Theatre Company** today are thrilled to share the announcement of **Soulpepper's 2022 Season**, celebrating the Company's 25th Anniversary, on stage from February to October 2022.

The 2022 Season welcomes audiences back to the theatre, exploring themes of family, community, and belonging with eight compelling shows including two World Premieres, a Canadian Premiere, a Toronto Premiere, and a soul stirring new Soulpepper Concert created by the newly appointed *Slaight Music Residents*. All programming details can be found at soulpepper.ca.

"In thinking about inviting audiences back to the theatre I thought a lot about what we have all been through as a society for the last 18 months. Many of us were with our families—some of us alone—waiting for the time we could gather again. The plays in our season all speak to the challenges and beauty of belonging. I want Soulpepper to be the place that brings us together through the simple act of sharing stories, and helps us to discover the connections that make us stronger as a community," said **Weyni Mengesha**, Artistic Director.

"Welcoming audiences back is something we have been craving for so long and we couldn't imagine a better way to celebrate 25 years than with the energy of a full house, sharing in the experience of being at the theatre, together again," said **Luke Reece**, Associate Artistic Director.

The programming is supported by Soulpepper's Community Conversation series, programmed by the new Metcalf Intern Artistic Director **Aria Evans**, inviting audiences into a dialogue with civic and artistic leaders to explore the ideas presented in the season.

Soulpepper is also pleased to announce a new complement of **Slaight Music Residents** including: **Divine Brown, Beau Dixon, Raha Javanfar, Travis Knights, and Andrew Penner**. The Slaight Music Residents are some of Toronto's top talent that will spend the residency honing their craft as artistic leaders and creating new musical works for our stages. The program will be led by Soulpepper's Slaight Family Director of Music, **Mike Ross**, and is supported by The Slaight Family.

"This is the next step for music at Soulpepper. We've been so well supported by our audiences and by the Slaight Family in developing our concerts and our music theatre programming. Thanks to continued support from the Slaight Family we now have the opportunity to expand music programming at Soulpepper by putting a new group of artists in positions of leadership. These are incredibly passionate, skilled people who have spent time working on many music centred projects at Soulpepper and they have so much to offer to the company," said **Mike Ross**, Slaight Family Director of Music.

The 2022 Season begins in the New Year with an out-of-this-world experience called **The Golden Record**, a new offering in Soulpepper's popular Concert Series, created by the new Slaight Music Residents with Frank Cox-

O’Connell and Sarah Wilson, and led by the Slaight Family Music Director Mike Ross. Together the collective tells the musical story of the famous Golden Record, sent by NASA into space to communicate to extraterrestrials what humanity is through music.

Following the kick off concert comes Haley McGee’s critically-acclaimed production, ***The Ex-Boyfriend Yard Sale***, directed by **Mitchell Cushman**, presented in association with Outside the March and red light district. Originally slated in Soulpepper’s 2020 Breaking Ground season, Soulpepper is excited to bring back this heartwarming–or heartbreaking–comedy.

Artistic Director **Weyni Mengesha** returns to the directorial helm in April with the Canadian Premiere of ***Pipeline***, the moving story about a mother’s fight for her son, by Dominique Morisseau, assistant directed by **Luke Reece**.

Soulpepper is incredibly pleased to partner with **Native Earth Performing Arts** for the first time, co-producing two Mainstage plays in the 2022 season. After her directorial debut at Soulpepper in 2019 with her celebrated production of *Almighty Voice and His Wife*, **Jani Lauzon** returns to direct Kevin Loring’s poignant and poetic play ***Where the Blood Mixes***, opening in June. Closing out the month of June is ***Kamloopa***, written and directed by **Kim Senklip Harvey**. The Indigenous Matriarch adventure is making its Toronto Premiere at Soulpepper.

Weyni Mengesha also directs the World Premiere of ***Queen Goneril***, one of the new plays commissioned through Soulpepper’s *Six Women Writing* project, next summer. ***Queen Goneril***, Erin Shields’ prequel to *King Lear*, runs in full repertory with a fresh take on Shakespeare’s ***King Lear***, directed by **Kim Collier**.

Closing out the announced season in September is ***Bad Parent***, from the creator of *Kim’s Convenience*, Ins Choi, and directed by **Thomas Morgan Jones**. This humour-filled and honest look into parenthood is making a rolling World Premiere across Canada with Vancouver Asian Canadian Theatre, Prairie Theatre Exchange, and Soulpepper.

Accompanying every Mainstage production in the 2022 season is a **Community Conversation** discussing ideas presented in each play with civic and artistic leaders. Exploring subjects including the climate crisis, Indigenous water teachings, the education system, and more, the Community Conversations, supported by TD Bank Group, include:

The Ex-Boyfriend Yard Sale – The LIVE Cost of Love Podcast on February 20, 2022

Pipeline – Pipe Up on April 23, 2022

Where The Blood Mixes – The Power of Water on June 11, 2022

Kamloopa – Healing with Humour on July 9, 2022

Queen Goneril – Current Adaptations Pt. I on September 3, 2022

King Lear – Current Adaptations Pt. II on September 10, 2022

Bad Parent – Survival Tactics on September 24, 2022.

For full details about Soulpepper’s Community Conversations see soulpepper.ca/communityconversations.

Soulpepper’s bold **Free 25 & Under** ticket program continues into 2022 with free tickets available for all Mainstage and Concert programming, available at 8:00AM day-of for patrons 25 years or younger, supported by

Sun Life Financial. As well, the accessible \$25 ticket tier will be available to everyone, at every Mainstage and Concert performance in the Season. Some conditions apply, please visit soulpepper.ca/waystosave.

Exclusive ticket access to the 2022 programming is on sale for **subscriptions as of 1:00PM today, November 16**. Single tickets for the 2022 season go on sale **December 1, 2021**. The theatres will have 100% capacities available to ticket buyers, and are being sold with a commitment to the health and safety of every patron, artist, and employee at the Young Centre. All patrons, artists, crew, staff, and volunteers at Soulpepper and the Young Centre must provide proof of full vaccination, *or* a medical exemption provided by a physician or nurse, along with a negative COVID-19 PCR test taken within 48 hours of the performance. For details on all of Soulpepper's programming, visit soulpepper.ca or contact the Young Centre Box Office at 416.866.8666

FEBRUARY – OCTOBER 2022 MAINSTAGE & CONCERT PROGRAMMING

The Golden Record

Created by Divine Brown, Frank Cox-O'Connell, Beau Dixon, Raha Javanfar, Travis Knights, Andrew Penner, Mike Ross, and Sarah Wilson
Directed by Frank Cox-O'Connell

A playlist of the planet.

How do we explain humanity and life on our planet as we know it? This Soulpepper concert is inspired by *The Voyager Golden Record*, a phonograph message that NASA sent out into space in an effort to communicate our world to any extraterrestrials who might find it. The album contained sounds and images selected to portray the diversity of life and culture on Earth.

Conceived by Mike Ross, our Slight Family Director of Music, this show allows our new ensemble of *Slight Music Residents* to express themselves through song and storytelling.

***The Golden Record* runs from February 9 to February 27, 2022.**

The Ex-Boyfriend Yard Sale

Written and Performed by Haley McGee
Directed by Mitchell Cushman
Produced by Haley McGee
Presented by Soulpepper in association with Outside the March and red light district

Can you turn sentimental value into cold, hard cash?

Haley McGee was on the phone with Visa, promising to pay off her bill by having a yard sale, when she realised the only things she could sell were gifts from her exes. Inspired by this call, *The Ex-Boyfriend Yard Sale* is a hilarious and daring show about calculating the cost of love... or what love costs us.

NNNNN *"one of the best shows of the year"* – *NOW Magazine*

******** *"a powerhouse performance"* – *The Stage*

***The Ex-Boyfriend Yard Sale* runs from February 11 to March 6, 2022. Opening Night is February 15, 2022.**

Pipeline

By Dominique Morisseau

Directed by Weyni Mengesha

Assistant Directed by Luke Reece

What a mother will do to save her son.

Pipeline is a deeply moving story of a single mother's fight to give her son a better future. Nya is an inner-city teacher who is desperate to give her son the opportunities she knows aren't available in the public school system. When an incident at his private school threatens to get him expelled, she must confront her son's rage and her own choices that led him there.

Nominated for 5 Lucille Lortel Awards, this thoughtful drama about community, family and the education system makes its Canadian Premiere.

"Pipeline confirms Dominique Morisseau's reputation as a playwright of piercing eloquence." – New York Times

Canadian Premiere

***Pipeline* runs from April 7 to May 8, 2022. Opening Night is April 14, 2022.**

Where the Blood Mixes

By Kevin Loring

Directed by Jani Lauzon

Co-production with Native Earth Performing Arts

A place in the heart where a father and daughter meet.

Where the Blood Mixes takes us to the place where the rivers meet, to the heart of a family. After decades apart, Christine returns to her First Nations community to reconnect with her father. Her return provokes his memories of the Residential School system and together they must confront that legacy and its effect on their family. With beautiful heart and great humour, this is a celebration of resilience and the healing power of stories.

Winner of the Governor General's Award for Drama

"a pitch-perfect production" – Toronto Star

***Where the Blood Mixes* runs from May 26 to June 26, 2022. Opening Night is June 2, 2022.**

Kamloopa

Written and Directed by Kim Senklip Harvey

Co-production with Native Earth Performing Arts

Always dance like the ancestors are watching.

With brilliance, irreverence, and fearless wit, three Indigenous women hit the road on their way to the largest powwow on the West Coast – and to self-discovery. But how do you discover yourself when Columbus allegedly already did that? Come along for the ride to connect with the ancestors on this mind bending and boundary blurring adventure.

Winner of the Governor General's Award for Drama

Toronto Premiere

***Kamloopa* runs from June 23 to July 24, 2022. Opening Night is June 30, 2022.**

Queen Goneril

By Erin Shields

Directed by Weyni Mengesha

Lear's daughter in a man's world.

Set seven years before Shakespeare's legendary play *King Lear*, *Queen Goneril* is seen through the eyes of his three daughters fighting a patriarchal system at odds with their aspirations. In *Goneril*, Regan and Cordelia we find a natural-born leader, a boundary pusher and a reluctant peacekeeper trying to survive and find their voices in their father's kingdom. But how can they when no one is listening? *Queen Goneril* brings the background into focus, and a previously deafening silence to an irresistible crescendo.

World Premiere

***Queen Goneril* runs in repertory with *King Lear* from August 25 to October 2, 2022. Opening Night is August 31, 2022.**

King Lear

By William Shakespeare

Directed by Kim Collier

Goneril's father near the end of his reign.

Sovereignty is a young man's game, and it's time for this aging monarch to fade into the background with one final demand - that his daughters profess their love for him before dividing the kingdom among them. This proves more complicated than anticipated, sending the family spiralling into madness and an unquenchable thirst for power.

***King Lear* runs in repertory with *Queen Goneril* from August 27 to October 1, 2022. Opening Night is September 2, 2022.**

Bad Parent

By Ins Choi

Directed by Thomas Morgan Jones

Co-production with Vancouver Asian Canadian Theatre and Prairie Theatre Exchange

Parenthood isn't easy. Especially in front of an audience.

While most people get to keep their parenting struggles behind closed doors, Charles and Norah are laying theirs bare. As the young couple navigate their life as parents of a toddler, they also try to figure out who they are in relation to each other, their son, and the audience. From the creator of *Kim's Convenience* comes a humorous and honest story about the rocky rite of passage into parenthood.

Rolling World Premiere

***Bad Parent* runs from September 15 to October 9, 2022. Opening Night is September 16, 2022.**

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Located in its multi-venue home, the Young Centre for the Performing Arts in Toronto's Distillery Historic District, Soulpepper is Toronto's largest not-for-profit theatre company. Founded and guided by artists, Soulpepper has an integrated mission which includes: industry-leading youth and community outreach initiatives; artist training and mentorship programs; and a year-round diverse repertory season which is grounded in the classics and committed to the creation of new works, new forms, and innovative practices.

The artists and staff of Soulpepper and the Young Centre for the Performing Arts acknowledge the original caretakers and storytellers of the land on which we are situated – the Wendat, the Haudenosaunee, and the Anishanabek First Nations, including the Mississaugas of the Credit. We commit to honouring and celebrating their past, present and future. Soulpepper believes people have a right to express their individuality, to experience creative freedom, to feel safe at all times, and to be treated with dignity and respect.

Tickets are available at soulpepper.ca. All ticket prices include a Young Centre facility fee, service charge and HST. Pricing is subject to change.

Soulpepper gratefully acknowledges annual operating support from the Ontario Arts Council, the Toronto Arts Council, and the Canada Council for the Arts.

Soulpepper is pleased to recognize the donors of transformational gifts to its Creative Capital Campaign: The Slight Family; The Government of Ontario; and Kevin and Roger Garland.

Support for the Soulpepper Academy is provided by the RBC Emerging Artists Project, the Government of Canada through the Arts Training Fund, Sylvia Soyka and the Kingfisher Foundation.

Soulpepper is grateful for the Major Sponsor and Community Access Partner, Scotia Wealth Management, and the additional lead support from The Catherine and Maxwell Meighen Foundation; CIBC; the TD Ready Commitment; Sun Life Financial; BMO Financial Group; and Diane Blake & Stephen Smith.

Support on Soulpepper's Stages comes from The Slight Family for *The Golden Record* and the complement of Slight Music Residents; Diane Blake and Stephen Smith for *Where The Blood Mixes*; Soulpepper Supporting Top Women and Sylvia Soyka for *Queen Goneril*; and Polar Asset Management Partners for *King Lear*.

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