

UNDER EMBARGO  
For Release on November 8, 2016

**PuSh International Performing Arts Festival**  
**Announces 2017 Lineup**

***Three-week festival showcases groundbreaking contemporary  
theatre, dance, multimedia & music***

**Vancouver, BC – The PuSh International Performing Arts Festival (PuSh Festival)** presents its 13th annual edition, taking place **January 16 to February 5, 2017 at various Vancouver venues**. Acclaimed artists representing 11 countries will descend on the city for the signature, three-week mid-winter event. From staggering spectacles to intimately immersive encounters, the 2017 PuSh Festival lineup showcases innovative, transformative art across a vast expanse of performance disciplines.

“I am tempted to tell you that we are back again, with our perennial offerings: same time, same place, similar roster of shows, but that couldn’t be further from the truth,” says Norman Armour, Artistic & Executive Director of the PuSh International Performing Arts Festival. “This year’s Festival attests to art as an act of resistance and provocation, as parser of unease and discomfort, as unraveller of taboo. This year, we have gathered fearless, visionary creators from around the globe to ignite dialogue and exploration on a litany of pressing themes: inclusivity and isolation, memory and mental health, love and conflict, gender and sexuality, and more. These artists are society’s true leaders, showing us the way forward, while illuminating the past and interrogating the present.”

The 2017 PuSh Festival features 27 works, including 21 Main Stage shows at various venues and six Club PuSh shows at The Fox Cabaret. Plus, the 2017 PuSh Festival offers industry networking events at the PuSh Assembly, free movies in the PuSh Film Series, professional workshops, artist talks, and many more ancillary events.

**PuSh Passes and tickets for the 2017 PuSh Festival are on sale now at [pushfestival.ca](http://pushfestival.ca).** Early Bird PuSh Passes start at \$103.

**MAIN STAGE SHOWS**

***Macbeth – Third World Bunfight (South Africa)***

Presented with Il Centro Italian Cultural Centre & Vancouver Opera  
Jan 16, 17, 19–21 | Vancouver Playhouse

A radical adaption of Verdi’s opera set in the Democratic Republic of Congo with mineral mines, machine guns and a corporate cabal. African musical idioms, contemporary costumes, projection and bold set design make this a true *Macbeth* for our times.

***Oil Pressure Vibrator – Geumhyung Jeong (South Korea)***

Presented with Centre A

Supported by Centre Stage Korea & SFU Woodward's  
Jan 17–19 | SFU Studio D at SFU's Goldcorp Centre for the Arts

Geumhyung Jeong, winner of the 2016 Hermès Foundation Award, takes audiences on her quest for autoerotic satisfaction with an industrial excavator. This is a courageous and transgressive performance that challenges notions of sexuality, technology and the body.

**Mess – Caroline Horton & Co. / China Plate (England)**

Presented with caravan & Vancouver International Children's Festival

Supported by Arts Council England & British Council

Jan 18–22 | Waterfront Theatre

Josephine, joined by best friends Boris and Sistahl, is putting on a play about anorexia. With wild invention, laughs galore and great songs to boot, this show tackles the realities of the disorder and its impact while offering hope for recovery.

**Sweat Baby Sweat – Jan Martens (Belgium/Netherlands)**

Presented with The Dance Centre

Supported by Performing Arts Fund Netherlands

Jan 18–20 | Scotiabank Dance Centre

Romance and sexuality are distilled to their physical essence in this brilliant piece of dance between one man and one woman. Minimalist with maximum exertion, each new contortion between the couple brings added tension, their portrayal of love growing more profound.

**By Heart – Tiago Rodrigues / Teatro Nacional D. Maria II (Portugal)**

Supported by Consulate General of Portugal in Vancouver

Jan 19–21 | Performance Works

Inspired by George Steiner's words, "Once 10 people know a poem by heart, there's nothing the KGB, the CIA or the Gestapo can do about it," distinguished playwright and actor Tiago Rodrigues teaches 10 audience members a poem. Rodrigues offers a personal, touching show about the power of art, not just to inform and inspire, but also to elude and fight oppression.

**As I Lay Dying – Theatre Smith-Gilmour (Canada)**

Presented with Arts Club Theatre Company

Jan 19–Feb 12 | Goldcorp Stage at the BMO Theatre Centre

William Faulkner's classic novel of one family's trek to lay its deceased matriarch to rest is adapted with remarkable innovation. With few props and no sets, these masters of physical theatre miraculously conjure another world through spectacular movement, lighting and sound.

**Garden of Earthly Delights – Mere Phantoms (Canada)**

Presented with grunt gallery & CSA Space

Jan 19–21 | CSA Space

Inspired by the Hieronymus Bosch painting of the same name, this immersive journey guides viewers with shadow projections and sound, moving from lush jungle to urban maze through a cityscape. This is illusionism at its finest—refined down to a beautiful binary of black and white.

**Human Library – Stop the Violence (Denmark)**

Presented with Zee Zee Theatre | Supported by Vancouver Public Library

Jan 21, 22, 28, 29; February 4 & 5 | Vancouver Public Library, Central Branch

Back by popular demand, the worldwide phenomenon and PuSh Festival favourite invites people to borrow a human book. Readers of this living literature will get a taste of other lives, perspectives and possibilities.

**Town Choir – Theatre Replacement (Canada)**

Presented with Theatre Replacement

Supported by Roundhouse Community Arts & Recreation Centre, Vancouver Public Library and Westbank

Jan 22, 29, Feb 5 | Various locations

Songwriters in cities across Canada type out observations of their surroundings and transmit them to Vancouver, where the Vancouver Youth Choir transforms them into song. Stories come from afar at fibre optic speed to become musical works of art.

**Four Thousand Holes – Vicky Chow/Ben Reimer (Canada)**

Presented with Music on Main

Jan 23 & 24 | The Fox Cabaret

Genre-bending drum kit whiz Ben Reimer and virtuosic pianist Vicky Chow bring their talents together to perform the world premieres of works by Music on Main's composer-in-residence Nicole Lizée and the acclaimed Vincent Ho, as well as John Luther Adams' *Four Thousand Holes*.

**Portraits in Motion – Volker Gerling/Aurora Nova (Germany)**

Presented with The Cultch

Jan 24–26 | York Theatre

An incandescent, flickering glimpse of human persona and essence. Striking portraits from photographic flipbooks are projected live onto the large screen. Charming stories behind each flipbook are recounted, bringing to life these frozen instances in time.

**The City and the City – Upintheair Theatre & The Only Animal (Canada)**

Presented with Upintheair Theatre & The Only Animal

Jan 24–29, 31; Feb 3–5 | Russian Hall

China Miéville's award-winning tale of two fictional cities unfolds as spectator becomes participant in a murder mystery. Audience members are "cast" upon arrival and equipped with ear buds and transmitter to receive cues throughout the play to collectively crack the case.

**Concord Floral – Erin Brubacher, Cara Spooner & Jordan Tannahill (Canada)**

Presented with Shadbolt Centre for the Arts, Surrey Civic Theatres & Touchstone Theatre

Supported by Roundhouse Community Arts & Recreation Centre, Seedlings Foundation, TELUS Community Board, Vancouver Foundation

Jan 25–29 | Roundhouse Community Arts & Recreation Centre

Drawing on Boccaccio's *The Decameron*, award-winning playwright Jordan Tannahill paints a powerful scenario: 10 teens seek refuge in an abandoned greenhouse from a plague they brought upon themselves. This critically acclaimed theatre thriller is cast with youth from across the Lower Mainland.

**Every Brilliant Thing – Paines Plough/Pentabus Theatre Company (England)**

Presented with caravan

Supported by Arts Council England, British Council

Jan 26–29 | Performance Works

In this heartrending yet hopeful play about depression and the lengths we will go to for those we love, comedian and performer Jonny Donahoe—with the help of the audience—delivers a list of all things worth living for, starting with ice cream.

**Zappa Meets Varèse & Oswald: The Present Day Composer Refuses to Die**

**Turning Point Ensemble (Canada)**

Presented with Turning Point Ensemble

Supported by SFU Woodward's

Jan 27–29 | Fei and Milton Wong Experimental Theatre at SFU's Goldcorp Centre for the Arts

The 30-piece Turning Point Ensemble and one of Canada's boldest composers, John Oswald, give two artists ahead of their time—Frank Zappa and Edgar Varèse—the performance their mad inventions deserve.

**Backstage in Biscuit Land – Touretteshero (England)**

Presented with caravan

Supported by Arts Council England, British Council and Vancity

Jan 30–Feb 1 | Roundhouse Community Arts & Recreation Centre

Jess Thom cannot stay on script. She involuntarily and repeatedly says “biscuit,” one of the verbal ticks of her Tourette syndrome. In this delightful and enlightening show, what society deems “atypical” allows Thom to soar with a hilarious and unhinged mix of improv, comedy and puppetry.

**Sculptress: The Music of Nicole Lizée – Standing Wave Ensemble (Canada)**

Presented with Standing Wave Ensemble & Music on Main

Jan 30 & 31 | The Fox Cabaret

Vancouver’s celebrated percussive ensemble, Standing Wave, joins forces with Montreal composer and video artist Nicole Lizée in an innovative and eclectic audiovisual feast for the senses.

**Mouthpiece – Quote Unquote Collective (Canada)**

Presented with The Cultch

Jan 31–Feb 5 | Historic Theatre at The Cultch

Amy Nostbakken and Norah Sadava play two halves of the same woman: a person grieving the loss of her mother, while attempting to plan the funeral, all envisaged in a bathtub. The two halves overlap seamlessly, but also diverge, revealing a fractured conscious many will relate to.

**Wallflower – Quarantine (England)**

Presented with caravan

Supported by Arts Council England & British Council

Feb 1–3 | Performance Works

Evoking memories of awkward high school dances, private groove sessions, a romantic slow dance and much more, the performers of *Wallflower* endeavour to recall every dance they have ever danced. This is storytelling in action, autobiography emerging in movement and music.

**FOLK-S, Will you still love me tomorrow? – Alessandro Sciarroni (Italy)**

Presented with The Dance Centre & Il Centro Italian Cultural Centre

Feb 2–4 | Scotiabank Dance Centre

The *schuhplattler* is a Bavarian folk dance in which performers strike their shoes and legs; it’s ecstatic, kinetic, and one walloping workout. In this contemporary interpretation the dancers take the form to physical extremes, performing in various rhythms and configurations with inconceivable endurance.

**dirtsong – Black Arm Band (Australia)**

Presented with Coastal Jazz

Supported by Australian High Commission Canada, CDm2 LIGHTWORKS, Full Circle: First Nations Performance

Feb 4 | Queen Elizabeth Theatre

Against a backdrop of stunning documentary, this spectacular performance company of Indigenous artists share songs honouring their connection to the earth with driving percussion, didgeridoo and soulful vocals. Deeply moving and intoxicating, this Canadian premiere poignantly coincides with the 150<sup>th</sup> year of our nation born from the displacement of Indigenous peoples.

**CLUB PUSH SHOWS**

Club PuSh at The Fox Cabaret features shows on Fridays and Saturdays in a less formal, less traditional space. These works by emerging and established artists are alive with the experimental spirit, pushing performance forms to new limits.

Club PuSh at The Fox Cabaret is also the social hub of the PuSh Festival where audiences can meet up with friends and colleagues—before and after shows, every night of the week—for drinks and music from guest DJs and featured curators.

Supported by Chan Family Foundation

**Dynasty Handbag – Jibz Cameron (USA)**

Jan 20

Jibz Cameron’s alter ego is Dynasty Handbag—a blazing, fearless stage presence. Rowdy, raunchy and queer as folk, she presents a veritable mixtape of songs from a roster of wholly invented artists.

**Things a Person is Supposed to Wonder – Bridget Moser (Canada)**

Jan 21

Bridget Moser stars in her own series of short, incisive performances employing props, jokes and music. Call it stand-up comedy, whimsical poetry or just plain unclassifiable, Moser’s work is fantastically entertaining and making waves in the arts world.

**Point Blank Poets (England)**

Presented with caravan

Supported by Arts Council England & British Council

Jan 27

Five preeminent spoken word artists with published books, plays and millions of YouTube views tackle the political, the personal and every point in between with burning passion and precision in their Canadian premiere.

**Revenge of the Popinjay – AnimalParts (USA/Canada)**

Presented with Zee Zee Theatre

Jan 28

AnimalParts was founded by Studio 58 graduates Anthony Johnston and Nathan Schwartz. Their experimental rap-horror show blends live hip-hop, storytelling, performance art, and graphic “heterophobia” in an exhilarating dark comedy.

**Visitors From Far Away to the State Machine – Hong Kong Exile (Canada)**

Feb 3

The 2017 PuSh Festival’s Artists-in-Residence present their profane space oddity that follows two aliens visiting Earth for their honeymoon. Video graphics and nonlinear storytelling fuse in this intergalactic opera spanning thousands of years.

**Lido Pimienta (Canada)**

Feb 4

Colombian-born, Toronto-based musician Lido Pimienta has shared the stage with such stars as Tanya Tagaq and A Tribe Called Red. In a night of music for a revolution, she offers a tribute to nature and the de-colonized spirit at the intersection of ethnicity, gender and nationality.

**PUSH ASSEMBLY**

The PuSh Assembly is an open invitation to industry insiders and arts aficionados alike, to gather to connect and share ideas and perspectives around the performing arts. The 2017 PuSh Assembly is designed in two series: Ideas (free and open to the public) and Industry (accessible with a PuSh Industry Pass). The PuSh Assembly events engage audiences and industry professionals with the Festival artists through artist talks, a dialogue series and networking opportunities

## **PUSH PASSES**

PuSh Passes are the best way to experience the PuSh Festival. Pass holders save up to 30% off single tickets. PuSh Passes are flexible so Passholders can book tickets and make exchanges online at anytime. Limited quantities.

Four-Show Pass	<b>\$103</b> early bird rate / <b>\$119</b> regular rate
Six-Show Pass	<b>\$148</b> early bird rate / <b>\$176</b> regular rate
Industry Pass	<b>\$208</b> early bird rate / <b>\$236</b> regular rate
Youth Four-Show Pass	<b>\$20</b> regular rate

Early bird rate ends on **November 22 at 5pm PST**

## **PUSH SHOW PACKS**

Show Packs are a great introduction to PuSh, and provide a carefully curated sampling of our cutting-edge shows that span different forms and practices, by artists from different countries. Audiences can enjoy three unique shows—one show per week, on a pre-set day.

### **WEDNESDAY SHOW PACK: Hurray for Hump Day \$99**

*Sweat Baby Sweat* – Jan 18 8pm

*Concord Floral* – Jan 25 7pm

*Backstage in Biscuit Land* – Feb 1 8pm

### **FRIDAY SHOW PACK: Work Up to the Weekend \$99**

*By Heart* – Jan 20 7pm

*Every Brilliant Thing* – Jan 27 7pm

*FOLK-S, Will you still love me tomorrow?* – Feb 3 8pm

## **TICKETS**

Single tickets start at \$10.

To buy tickets, visit [pushfestival.ca](http://pushfestival.ca) or call the PuSh Festival Audience Services info line at 604.449.6000.

## **MORE INFORMATION**

Pick up the comprehensive 64-page 2017 program guide at any location of JJ Bean, Choices Markets and other select locations. You can also reach us at: [pushfestival.ca](http://pushfestival.ca), [info@pushfestival.ca](mailto:info@pushfestival.ca) or 604.605.8284.

### **About the PuSh International Performing Arts Festival ([pushfestival.ca](http://pushfestival.ca))**

The PuSh International Performing Arts Festival is Vancouver's signature, mid-winter cultural event, taking place over three weeks each January in theatres and venues across the city. The PuSh Festival presents groundbreaking, contemporary works of theatre, dance, music, and multimedia by acclaimed local, national, and international artists.

---

-30-

### **For further media information, contact**

Hanah Van Borek | T. 604.558.2400 ext. 506 | C. 778.322.8967

[hvanborek@mpmgarts.com](mailto:hvanborek@mpmgarts.com)

MURRAY PATERSON

MARKETING GROUP

FORMERLY LAURA MURRAY PUBLIC RELATIONS