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Centaur Theatre unveils lineup for new season



RICHARD BURNETT, SPECIAL TO MONTREAL GAZETTE

[More from Richard Burnett. Special to Montreal Gazette](#)

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The theme of the Centaur Theatre's upcoming 2015-16 season is "luminous" because the six mainstage productions all shed light on the human condition.

From the season-opening *The Adventures of a Black Girl in Search of God* by Governor General Award-winning playwright Djanet Sears, to *Last Night at the Gayety*, a musical satire about Montreal's Sin City heyday, all six plays are also Canadian contemporary works.

"Our best box office over the years have all been Canadian plays, from the works of Steve Galluccio and Vittorio Rossi to David Fennario and Colleen Curran," said Centaur artistic director Roy Surette, who officially announced the new season on Wednesday. "We found that these plays

would work well together, and Montrealers love Montreal stories.”

The season will kick off with Djanet Sears’s *The Adventures of a Black Girl in Search of God*, co-produced with the National Arts Centre and in association with Montreal’s Black Theatre Workshop. Sears will also direct her play, which boasts a large cast of 22 and tells the story of Lorraine ‘Rainey’ Johnson, an African-Canadian doctor living in Negro Creek. Rainey is grieving over the loss of her daughter, the end of her marriage and dealing with her ailing father, and questions her belief in God, in an at-times humorous play that runs Sept. 22 to Oct. 18.

“This play has been with me since I was a student at theatre school when I read George Bernard Shaw’s short story *The Adventures of the Black Girl in Her Search for God*, and I remember thinking, ‘That’s a short story about me.’ But it wasn’t,” said Sears in an interview with the *Gazette*. “I decided then that I would write a play about black people because I wanted us to be the centre of the story. Then one day I wrote that play — this play — and it fit with my adaptation of George Bernard Shaw’s title.”

Next up, Surette will direct the Quebec premiere of Nicholas Billon’s critically acclaimed stage thriller *Butcher*, about an elderly man accused of being a war criminal. Was this man “the Butcher” in charge of a concentration camp in Lavinia and wanted by Interpol? This violent mystery is filled with twists and turns, and runs Nov. 3-29.

“Nicholas Billon is a really terrific writer with great characters, and when I first read this play I could not put it down,” Surette said. “It is filled with surprises and has relevance about the notion of war crimes.”

The season continues with the world premiere of Concordia University theatre graduate Alexandria Haber’s *On This Day*, a comedy-drama about a bickering couple driving to a friend’s birthday party, and who may or may not have accidentally hit a young woman who came out of nowhere. To keep an eye on her, the couple insist she join them at the party where the mysterious stranger’s curiosity and honesty provokes the partygoers to re-examine their lives. *On This Day* runs Feb. 9 to March 6, 2016.

The English-language world premiere of *Bus Stops*, written, directed and choreographed by Théâtre I.N.K artistic director Marilyn Perreault, will run March 1-27, 2016. Presented in its original French (*Ligne de bus*) at Théâtre Aux Écuries last year, the much-buzzed about *Bus Stops* is about the hidden dreams, fears and secrets of a group of passengers riding a public bus when a catastrophic explosion stops the bus dead in its tracks. A coroner interviews the passengers to unravel the mystery behind the tragedy. Many actors from the 2014 original cast will reprise their

roles at the Centaur.

Pillow Talk: An Essay on Dreaming by Dulcinea Langfelder explores that hazy place between slumber and consciousness, as a woman floats into another world where she is the creator of her own destiny. “I believe that dreaming is at the heart of our spiritual selves,” Langfelder said. “The way I have always structured my work is by my dreams.”

Pillow Talk runs March 29 to April 24, 2016.

Centaur closes their main-stage series with the world premiere of the *Last Night at the Gayety*, created by Rick Blue and George Bowser, who also created Centaur’s 2011 smash *Schwartz’s: The Musical*. Directed by Roy Surette, *Last Night at the Gayety* steps back in time to Montreal 1951 to chronicle then-police chief Pax Plante’s moral crusade to eliminate vice from Montreal, while famed burlesque queen Lili St. Cyr held court at the Gayety.

“I have always been fascinated with Montreal’s Sin City heyday when everybody came to Montreal to do naughty things,” Blue said. “We did a lot of research about the real characters we use, like Lili St. Cyr who kept Montreal’s last vaudeville house The Gayety alive, while Pax Plante was trying to clean the city up. It’s Lili versus Pax, and I think this story will be well-received by Montrealers who still celebrate this city’s storied Sin City past.”

Last Night at the Gayety runs April 19 to May 15, 2016.

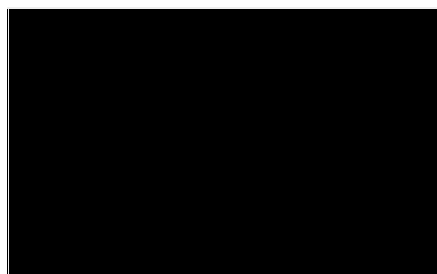
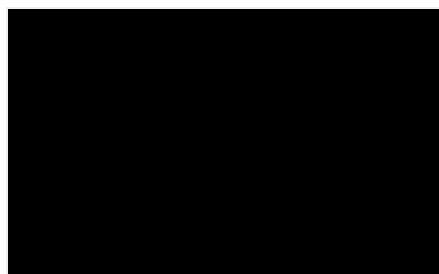
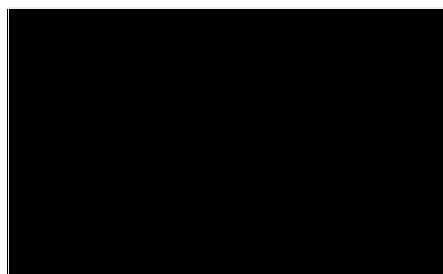
For more information on Centaur Theatre’s 2015-16 season, call 514-288-3161 or visit centaurtheatre.com.

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This Week's Flyers





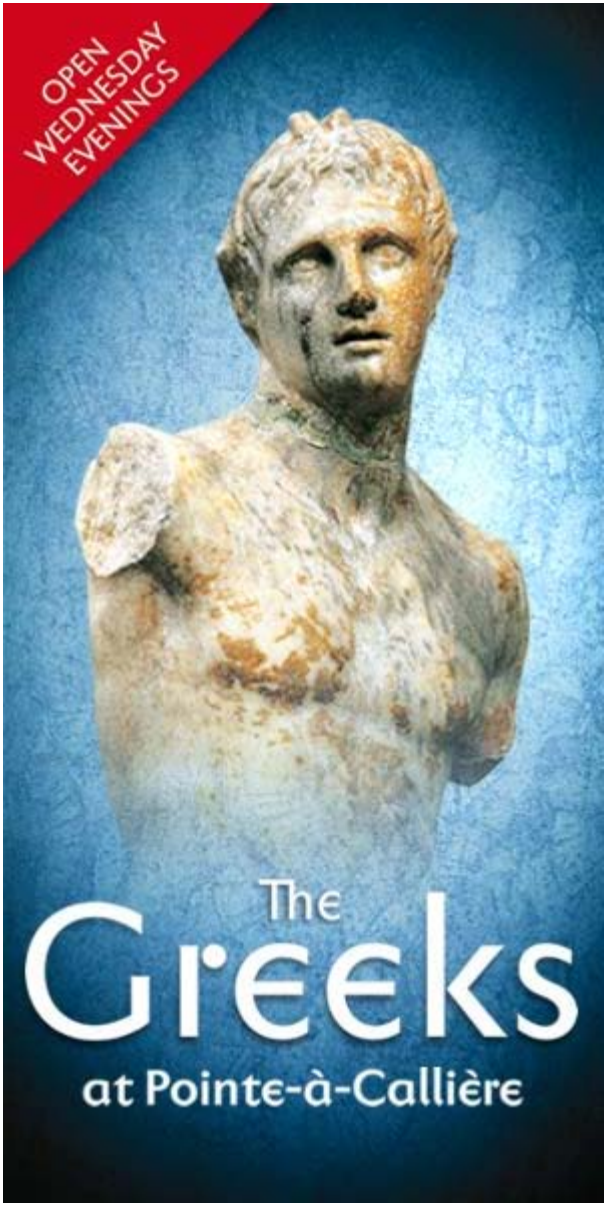
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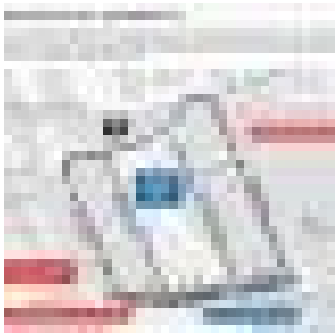




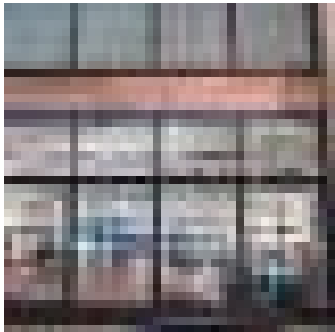
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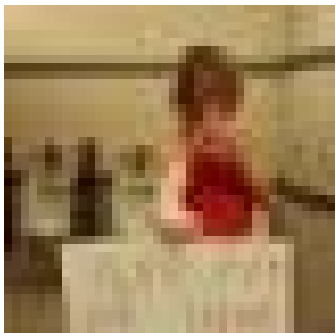
Trans men in women's bathrooms: Get used to it?



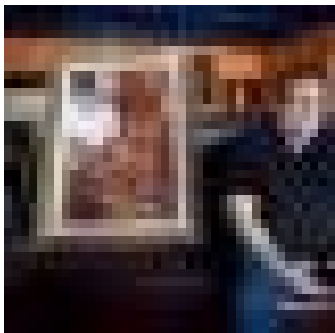
Traffic chaos probable in N.D.G. as St-Jacques to be closed for two-and-a-half years



Soldiers turned away from bar because they were in military dress



Transgender rights: Bathroom protest movement is born



The taste of the upper Main returns to Dollard-des-Ormeaux

Zinfandel and the field blend

Spring/Summer Social Calendar

Best Buys: Look for asparagus and strawberries

Table Talk: Hotline to nutrition

Time to taste: Zinfandel

Lots of bang for the buck if you like oak

Shaping Up: Women work together, in sickness and in health

Tip Sheet for the week of March 9

Precious memories are so often coloured by the passage of time

Applause: Swap meet is music to children's ears

Fitness: Do men lose weight more easily than women?

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