

TARRAGON THEATRE

Tarragon Theatre announces 55th Anniversary season, continuing a legacy of incubating Canadian storytellers

Kat Sandler's *YAGA* to return to the stage where it first made waves, *MONKS* gets its first full run, and an array of bold Canadian voices are set to be discovered in a 26/27 season brimming with new thrills and fresh takes on celebrated works

MADE HERE. CELEBRATED EVERYWHERE.

March 16, 2026, TORONTO - Artistic Director Mike Payette and Executive Director Lisa Li are thrilled to unveil Tarragon Theatre's 2026/27 season, marking 55 years of championing bold Canadian storytelling. This landmark season will captivate and immerse audiences with thrilling world premieres, the return of celebrated voices, and dynamic new partnerships with local and national companies.

For more than five decades, Tarragon has been a launchpad for Canadian voices. As a longstanding home for breaking out new work, building sustained creative relationships and fostering ambitious, genre-bending storytelling, Tarragon celebrates a history and continued mission to provide the space artists need to develop work that has a life far beyond its stages.

Tarragon's **Artistic Director, Mike Payette**, reflects:

"I have been so fortunate to witness and learn from the breadth of Tarragon's impact during my five seasons here. The gathering of artists coming to celebrate this milestone year allows us to continue uplifting beloved playwrights and productions while building bridges to new voices that are undeniably brilliant. Our partnerships and national collaborations that reach coast-to-coast are some of the most exciting to-date, and we can't wait for Toronto to discover more of the country's most powerful theatre makers. There is lots to celebrate this season, and we hope it is one that inspires, moves and transports audiences to new worlds within and around them."

Tarragon's **Executive Director, Lisa Li**, notes:

"Since the beginning, Tarragon's singular mission has been to advocate for Canadian playwrights by developing and producing their work and making sure it reaches audiences far and wide. We believe deeply in home-grown storytellers and for those stories to be heard, felt and celebrated on the local, national and international stage. For our 55th anniversary season, we are doubling down on this. By joining us this year, you are giving Canadian storytellers the microphone and daring the world to listen."

Tarragon's 55th anniversary season begins in the Mainspace with **PROPHETESS**, a **World Premiere** from **Ho Ka Kei (Jeff Ho)**, inspired by Shakespeare's History Plays. In this striking new work, the Chair of an English Department and Queen of Etymology wakes from a

spider-filled nightmare, only to discover this has manifested in reality - cursing the start of the term, filling it with sparring words and a battle for the throne. *Prophetess* explores how the words we choose to define ourselves may also define our future. Starring Canadian stage and screen talents including **Karen Robinson**, **Christine Horne** and **Rick Roberts**, with direction by **Mike Payette**, *PROPHETESS* takes the stage September 29 - October 25, 2026.

The Extraspace season begins with the first full run for the runaway Fringe Festival hit, ***MONKS***, a show that has stolen the hearts of the lucky few who've seen its limited appearances thus far. Unhinged in the best way, step inside this piece created, directed and performed by **Veronica Hortigüela & Annie Luján** - a shockingly dumb, interactive journey packed with daring physical comedy, unbridled chaos, and every possible interpretation of the word "ass". *MONKS* is on stage October 20 - November 8, 2026.

"Wickedly funny and surprisingly poignant, MONKS could be the next great success story."
- Globe & Mail

Next up is the **English-Language World Premiere** of ***THE NIGHT LOGAN WOKE UP***, a Co-Production by Tarragon Theatre, Artistic Fraud of Newfoundland and Resource Centre for the Arts Theatre. Bringing celebrated Quebecois work to Tarragon, the critically acclaimed French-language play *La Nuit où Laurier Gaudreault s'est Réveillé* by **Michel Marc Bouchard**, previously adapted into a miniseries by Xavier Dolan (now available on Netflix in the US), receives its first English adaptation by **Robert Chafe**, with direction from **Jillian Keiley**. After years away, a celebrated embalmer returns to her small Newfoundland hometown for her mother's funeral. Reuniting with her three brothers, she uncovers a shocking revelation. Surreal, daring and darkly funny, this is one of Bouchard's most powerful works. *THE NIGHT LOGAN WOKE UP* has a rolling English-Language World Premiere beginning in Newfoundland before arriving on the Tarragon Mainspace from November 17 - December 13, 2026.

The new year begins with the **World Premiere** of ***CALL ME BY MY COUSIN'S NAME***, a Tarragon Theatre and Outside the March Co-Production. Written by **Anahita Dehbonehie** and directed by **Mitchell Cushman**, this immersive, riotous diaspora gothic follows William, whose marriage to his Persian wife Tara is unraveling, and the arrival of Tara's estranged cousin, which forces all of them to confront identity, cultural expectations, and the gap between who we roleplay and who we long to be. *CALL ME BY MY COUSIN'S NAME* is in the Mainspace from February 2 - February 28, 2027.

The **Toronto Premiere** of ***THE SHOPLIFTERS***, written and directed by **Morris Panych**, brings the iconic Canadian playwright back to Tarragon with a dark, comic exploration of morality, survival and what people take from one another. A seasoned shoplifter and her reluctant accomplice are caught in the act, sparking a clash of perspectives between two security guards. A sharp comedy about ethics, and just how different the haves and have-nots may actually be, *THE SHOPLIFTERS* is in the Extraspace March 2 - March 28, 2027.

Damien Atkins and **Fiona Reid** are set to star in the **World Premiere** of **Katherine Gauthier's** **YOU'RE STILL HERE**. With direction by **Andrew Kushnir**, this suspenseful new work follows a leading palliative care physician as he navigates the ethical and emotional effects unleashed by new medical technology that can pinpoint the exact moment of your death. Examining the cost of knowing too much, and what the meaning of life is when the end is in clear view, the World Premiere run of *YOU'RE STILL HERE* is on stage in the Mainspace, March 23 - April 18, 2027.

With Spring comes the **World Premiere** of **DEFINITION**, written by **Luke Reece** and directed by **Mike Payette**. A Tarragon Theatre and Obsidian Theatre Company Co-Production, this new piece offers charm and humour in a memory-driven family story about finding your voice, your future and yourself when life refuses to stay defined. *DEFINITION* runs in the Extraspace, April 27 - May 23, 2027.

Tarragon's 55th anniversary season closes with an iconic return - award-winning playwright **Kat Sandler's** **YAGA** is back with an all new production, set to be directed by **Jill Harper**. This dark, thrilling fairy-tale first captivated audiences when it had its celebrated world premiere at Tarragon in 2019, followed by appearances across Canada and the US. *YAGA* is currently being adapted into a series for Crave coming in 2026. Inspired by Baba Yaga, the legendary witch who grinds the bones of the wicked, the play begins with a gruesome smalltown murder that plunges a local sheriff, young detective and scandalously curious professor into a labyrinth of secret lives, ancient magic and deadline intrigue. Part thriller, part revenge tale, and part wickedly fun fairytale, *YAGA* gives a voice to the fearsome witch herself. This all new production will take the stage in Tarragon's Mainspace, May 11 - June 6, 2027.

Additional programming:

We're pleased to welcome a guest presentation with the North American Premiere of ***THE FIFTH STEP***, a Studio 180 Theatre production in association with Tarragon Theatre. Written by David Ireland, this darkly funny and emotionally charged piece explores addiction, masculinity, faith and the fragile line between guidance and control. *The Fifth Step* is on stage in the Extraspace January 19 - February 7, 2027.

Giving families access to great live theatre continues to be a priority as we mark the return of **The Sally Stavro Family Series**, offering curated performances from youth-focused theatre companies and artists. Made possible by support from The Steve and Sally Stavro Family Foundation, The Family Series brings productions, workshops and other activities throughout the season. With free tickets for youth under 12, this programming provides the perfect opportunity for an introduction to live performance for the next generation of theatre champions.

Tarragon also continues its partnership with Toronto Metropolitan University's Performance at the Creative School. Tarragon commissions playwrights to develop a new piece specifically for the graduating class with a public performance at Tarragon Theatre.

As we mark the 55th anniversary of Tarragon Theatre, we look forward to an exciting, compelling 26/27 season that reflects Tarragon's legacy and continued commitment to incubating Canadian

storytelling, empowering the rich scope of Canadian artists, and delivering a captivating theatre home for all audiences.

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Tarragon's 2026/27 Season

Prophetess

Written by Ho Ka Kei (Jeff Ho)

Directed by Mike Payette

World Premiere

September 29 - October 25, 2026

Mainspace

Margaret, the Chair of her English Department — and the Queen of Etymology — snaps awake, haunted by a nightmare of spiders. As she confides in her love, Henry, over breakfast, that very same spider from her dream manifests — speaking, growling, and cursing her. And so begins the first day of her term: overrun with eight-legged beasts, sparring words, a battle for the throne, a journey of joyous love, and insatiable prophecies.

Inspired by Shakespeare's History Plays, *Prophetess* excavates etymology to ask: What does it mean to curse or bless oneself? What are the words we choose to define ourselves — and our future?

Featuring: Karen Robinson, Christine Horne, Rick Roberts | *additional cast to be announced*

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MONKS

A Veronica Hortigüela & Annie Luján Production, Presented by Tarragon Theatre

Created and Directed by Veronica Hortigüela & Annie Luján

Tarragon Premiere

October 20 - November 8, 2026

Extraspace

In this monastery of mayhem, nothing is sacred....

The monks who reside in the hilltop monastery have always lived in total isolation. But when the Abbott ventures into town, two medieval Brothers seize the chance to invite a wagon full of strangers into their austere abode.

Across this one-hour clown epic, the monks' daily rituals — counting lentils, caring for their donkey, and keeping the monastery from collapse — become the quest of a lifetime. Accept their invitation and step inside this shockingly dumb, interactive journey, packed with daring physical comedy, unbridled chaos, and every possible interpretation of the word "ass."

Featuring: Veronica Hortigüela & Annie Luján

The Night Logan Woke Up

A Tarragon Theatre, Artistic Fraud of Newfoundland and Resource Centre for the Arts Theatre Co-Production

Written by Michel Marc Bouchard

Translated by Robert Chafe

Directed by Jillian Keiley

English-Language World Premiere

November 17 - December 13, 2026

Mainspace

As a girl, Emilia Lynch would cheat insomnia by slipping into neighboring houses to spy on people as they slept, including her childhood crush Logan Goodyear.

Now, many years later, Emilia— an internationally renowned embalmer to the rich and famous— has returned to her small Newfoundland town following the death of her mother. As she prepares for the funeral alongside her three brothers, a shocking revelation is unearthed in her mother's will; the final devastating consequence of the night Logan woke up.

Surreal, daring, and darkly funny, *The Night Logan Woke Up* is one of Bouchard's finest works, making its long-awaited English language world premiere.

Cast to be announced

Call Me By My Cousin's Name

A Tarragon Theatre and Outside the March Co-Production

Written by Anahita Dehbonehie

Directed by Mitchell Cushman

World Premiere

February 2 - February 28, 2027

Mainspace

William is an expert on his Persian wife Tara: her mother, her culture, her turn-ons. Yet their marriage is collapsing fast. So he plans one last BIG surprise with the help of his infinitely patient colleague Shahriar - who is desperate for a favour of his own. But when Tara's estranged

cousin arrives at the door, both women must figure out how to step over the threshold into brave new possibilities. And not just to escape William's soggy shrimp.

Anahita Dehbonehie's riotous Diaspora Gothic play is a thrilling exploration of life right now in Iran, life right now here, and the space between who we roleplay and who we long to be—with a shattering immersive climax.

Cast to be announced

The Shoplifters

Written and Directed by Morris Panych

Toronto Premiere

March 2 - March 28, 2027

Extraspace

In this new comedy from Morris Panych, we meet Alma, a seasoned career shoplifter who prefers the five-finger discount over a seniors' day deal. But it's not just an empty wallet that leads Alma to a life of petty crime.

Along for the ride is Phyllis, Alma's less-cool accomplice. When they're caught shoplifting, Alma does the talking—facing off against Dom, an eager rookie ready to call the cops, until his easygoing partner Otto steps in with a more sympathetic take. As wildly different perspectives collide, complex views on morality and ethics begin to emerge.

Panych's comedy offers biting observations about society's haves and have-nots and how much they might actually have in common.

Featuring: Oliver Dennis | *additional cast to be announced*

You're Still Here

Written by Katherine Gauthier

Directed by Andrew Kushnir

World Premiere

March 23 - April 18, 2027

Mainspace

A new medical technology tests the impossible: accurately predicting when a person will die. When it is quietly introduced into a hospice, Dr. Froese, a leading palliative care physician, must navigate the ethical and emotional tremors it sends through his daily life.

What does it mean to live, knowing when we'll die?

You're Still Here examines the cost of knowing too much, and the ways medicine shapes our understanding of dying, asking how we measure a life when the end is no longer abstract.

Featuring: Damien Atkins, Fiona Reid | *additional cast to be announced*

Definition

A Tarragon Theatre and Obsidian Theatre Company Co-Production

Written by Luke Reece

Directed by Mike Payette

World Premiere

April 27 - May 23, 2027

Extraspace

Ali is away from her family, trying to make peace with her past, while Martin struggles to find new meaning in his life back home.

Their daughter, Emerson, competes in her first spelling bee, determined to find her own voice against thunderous expectations.

Definition is a heartfelt journey of how we redefine ourselves when our dreams and expectations are compromised by life's givings. Unfolding from a chance encounter at a library in 1999, this family's present-day realities, and once-imagined futures seek new meaning.

Through laughter, memory and a little bit of spice (...Girls), this single day at the end of the world will unravel the origins and transform the future of their family as they know it.

Featuring: Akosua Amo-Adem | *additional cast to be announced*

YAGA

Written by Kat Sandler

Directed by Jill Harper

May 11 - June 6, 2027
Mainspace

Bad children are the softest, the easiest to eat; but a bad man's bones hold power, and power tastes like salt.

YAGA is a genre-bending fairy tale meets whodunit, inspired by Baba Yaga, the witch who lives alone in the woods grinding the bones of the wicked.

A gruesome murder in a small town leads a local sheriff, a young detective and a professor with a taste for younger men into a labyrinth of secret lives, ancient magic and multiple suspects.

A play that gives voice to the wicked old witch, it's part thriller, part revenge play and part fun

YAGA is currently being adapted into a series for Crave coming in 2026.

Cast to be announced

GUEST PRESENTATION

The Fifth Step

A Studio 180 Theatre production in association with Tarragon Theatre
North American Premiere
January 19 - February 7, 2027

Two men. One room.
Luka is new to AA.
James has agreed to be his sponsor.

What begins as a ritual of confession becomes a volatile struggle for power. Darkly funny and emotionally charged, *The Fifth Step* explores addiction, masculinity, faith, and the fragile line between guidance and control.

Studio 180 Theatre (*Four Minutes Twelve Seconds, You Will Remember Me*) presents the North American premiere of David Ireland's gripping theatrical showdown.

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26/27 Season Subscriptions are on sale now. **Single Tickets go on sale on July 1** and can be purchased online at <https://purchase.tarragontheatre.com/>, or by phone at 416-531-1827. Discounts are available for students, seniors, groups and arts workers.

Tarragon offers the **most flexible subscription packages** in the city with significant discounts on subscription pricing and special events, flexible scheduling and no exchange fees.

For more information on Tarragon's programming, visit www.tarragontheatre.com

Tarragon Theatre gratefully acknowledges operating support from the Canada Council for the Arts, the Ontario Arts Council and the Toronto Arts Council.

ABOUT TARRAGON THEATRE

Tarragon Theatre is a creation and playwrights' theatre. We develop, produce and present premiere productions that investigate artistic form, offering enriching and provocative theatre experiences for the artist and audience. For the past 55 years, our mission has been a foundation within Canadian theatre, new play development and dramaturgy practice. We open our doors to celebrate and learn from the scope of voices that make up our country and the various artistic practices that resonate within them. Tarragon is equally a hub for creation and development as it is a production company, with the ultimate goal of creating a meaningful environment for artists to thrive and bridge their ideas from concept to realization.

For more information visit www.tarragontheatre.com

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