



# PRAIRIE THEATRE EXCHANGE

WINNIPEG — [Prairie Theatre Exchange](#) is delighted to announce the lineup for the company's 52nd season, celebrating stories from the heart of the Canadian prairies, the big city, and beyond. The September–May season will feature a 5-show subscription series that emphasizes warmth and wit, with additional digital presentations throughout the Winter, and the return of the 'PTE in Concert' series in the Spring.

## SUBSCRIPTION SERIES

Opening the season is a sitcom-style romantic comedy from playwright **Mark Crawford** (*The Birds and the Bees*, *The New Canadian Curling Club*) about a gay couple who moves from Toronto to small-town Ontario to open a B&B. [Capitol Theatre's production](#) of *BED & BREAKFAST* (first produced at [Thousand Islands Playhouse](#) in 2015, featuring Crawford, and reproduced at theatres across the country ever since), is directed by **Rob Kempson** and features **Kyle Golemba** and **Amir Haidar** in a combined 20+ roles of all ages and genders, promising “*hilarious, escalating farce*” ([Artsfile](#)), with a heartfelt love story at its centre.

*“I was inspired by true stories of queer people living in smaller communities: both the positive side of that experience, and the more challenging aspects. The play calls on us to live openly and honestly—not just queer people, but everyone. Thematically, it's about love, family, and the search for home”*

- Mark Crawford



*Bed & Breakfast* Playwright, Mark Crawford (left) and Director, Rob Kempson (right)

*PONDEROSA PINE*, which premiered in an audio format last season, is a mythical memoir by **Andraea Sartison** ([One Trunk Theatre](#)) that weaves together a family's stories around a central landmark, the Ponderosa Pine. Sartison, who believes that “*if heaven were a real place, it would be in the Prairies,*” was inspired by the coinciding birth of her first son with the death of her maternal grandfather to reflect on the stories that shape our families and identities. This season, the show will be produced for the stage for the first time, engaging an all-Manitoban creative and production team.

*“Originally a PTE commission, this play is a stunning ode to the Prairies, and to the families that settled in Manitoba generations ago. With an all Manitoban team of artists bringing the story to life, the play is sure to resonate with audiences here in Winnipeg”*

– Thomas Morgan Jones

In December, PTE will welcome back Winnipeg's favourite improv company, Outside Joke, for their third year of improvised, holiday-themed shenanigans. This year, the tradition will take on a new twist as the group moves away from the structure of Charles Dickens' *A Christmas Carol*, and dives into some more modern material: namely, the feel-good holiday rom-com, popularized by the Hallmark Channel. **OUTSIDE JOKE'S CHRISTMAS MIRACLE: AN IMPROVISED HOLIDAY ROM-COM** will open up the improvisational playing field, presenting an abundance of all-new and modern tropes for the troupe to play with, including

(but not limited to) “romantic misadventures, city-to-country homecomings, and town square tree lighting ceremonies,” according to the group.

*“We cannot express our yuletide joy at returning to PTE this holiday season! We have left Dickens in the dust and are now tackling the modern, but no less classic, approach to holiday storytelling: the feel-good Holiday Film! Warm your toes by the fire and put a tap in that maple tree, cuz things are about to get SAPPY!”*

– Outside Joke



Outside Joke: (from left to right) Andrea del Campo, RobYn Slade, Toby Hughes, Chadd Henderson, Paul De Gurse, and Jane Testar.

A food critic is poisoned at an exclusive five-star restaurant, known as La Cucina, and Detective Lucia Dante must untangle the web of deceit, red herrings, petty jealousies, and hidden relationships to uncover the truth. Reminiscent of the popular *Knives Out* franchise, ***A KILLING AT LA CUCINA***, premiering in February 2024, is a darkly witty murder mystery by PTE’s own Thomas Morgan Jones. The World Premiere co-production with the genre-experts at [Vertigo Theatre](#) will be directed by Vertigo Artistic Director, **Jack Grinhaus**.

*“There’s nothing like a solid murder mystery. A whodunnit and also a whydunnit.*

*A co-production with Calgary’s Vertigo Theatre (the country’s leading mystery theatre), this production was programmed to delight and thrill audiences.”*

–Thomas Morgan Jones

***RAISED BY WOMEN***, a World Premiere PTE production written by Métis playwright **Keith Barker** (*The Hours That Remain, This Is How We Got Here*) will close the Season Subscription Series in April 2025. In it, Barker, himself an extraordinary storyteller, effortlessly and seamlessly shares tales of the lessons he has learned through the women in his life. An autobiographical work, (“*which is new to me,*” Barker noted,) the one-hander is a hilarious and heartwarming love letter to the women who raised him. Its premiere will mark seven consecutive years of PTE’s commitment to programming new works by Indigenous artists.

*"Keith's play is stunning in its vulnerability and in how it inspires us all to think about how we were raised and how we became who we are today."*

- Thomas Morgan Jones



Playwrights Andraea Sartison (left) and Keith Barker (right) will premiere new works produced by PTE in 2024/25.

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#### **ADDITIONAL PROGRAMMING**

PTE's commitment to presenting digital works will continue in 2024/25 with productions supplementing the season's on-stage pause in January. In PTE's first-ever live film screening event, ***LES FILLES DU ROI*** by Corey Payette & Julie Mclsaac will be presented in the Cherry Karpysin Mainstage Theatre for one night only on January 16. The [Urban Ink & Raven Theatre Performance Society production](#), which began as Payette's award-winning stage musical, recently won for Best Picture, Best Director (Corey Payette), and Best Original Score (Corey Payette & Julie Mclsaac) at the 2024 [Flathead Lake International Cinemafest](#).



Corey Payette

*"This film is an extraordinary feat. I marvel and the staggering beauty of the story and also the filmmaking."*

- Thomas Morgan Jones

The historical fiction tells the story of a young Mohawk girl, whose life is forever changed when she and her brother befriend a "Daughter of the King" in New France, 1665. This musical full-length film features performances in Kanien'kéha:ka (Mohawk), French, and English.

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*“As a fat person, I never thought of myself as ‘sexy.’ Society never allowed me to ... So I got funny.”*

- Cheyenne Rouleau

Later in the month of January will be the digital release of **FAT JOKE**, a Newworld Theatre production written and performed by Cheyenne Rouleau. From January 27 – February 2, the fusion performance experience, incorporating stand-up comedy, storytelling, and unapologetic fact-blasting will become available to stream for free from the PTE website.



Cheyenne Rouleau



Julia Davis in *These Eyes*,  
February 2024

The PTE in Concert series will also make its comeback following the success of *These Eyes*, this season’s Valentine’s Day-themed event, with **DEAR MOM...** On Mother’s Day, May 11, 2025, an ensemble of local Winnipeg musicians will gather for one night only, to tell stories and perform some of the most famous songs written for and about mothers and mother figures, in celebration of the special day.

Alongside the season’s programming, PTE will continue its commitment to fostering a home for Winnipeg artists by expanding the PTE Training Hub program to run for the full season, incorporating intensive in-person training for actors, directors and playwrights, drop-in workshops, and interactive discussions.